[For the role of "talking saints" in Tzeltal medical practices, see also category 756.]

614 /1/ Cancuc is a Tzeltal town of Chiapas, Mexico, whose
[101] social organization is based on exogamous patrilineal clans.
[776] These clans are intimately related to: 1) the nagual or guardian
[551] spirit, which is given the name of lab among the Indians of this
[613] region; 2) the native surnames that constitute the lineages within
[621] the clans; 3) the "barrios," as the Spanish chroniclers called the endogamous tribal subdivisions (called calpulli among the Aztecs and culibal in Cancuc); 4) the kinship system; and 5) the behavior.

614 All the individuals belonging to a clan consider themselves
601 "legitimate siblings" /Sp. "hermanos legítimos"/, using the terms that designate this class of relatives. This theoretical consanguineous kinship is expressed by means of the word chapomal -- a Cancuquero /a person from Cancuc/ calls another "brother" be-
614 cause he is his chapomal. This form of usage is indicative of
601 common ancestry, something that we were not able to clarify, as
124 our questions on this point only received answers that showed that
829 they had lost any notion of a real or mythical ancestor. Our informants invariably explained this situation with the expressions: "it is the custom," "San Juan /Saint John/ (Patron Saint of Cancuc) ordered it so," or "it was ordered by Manuel (God)." What does constitute a clear concept in the minds of all is that "formerly" each clan lived in a cave, from which its members went out in the form of human beings to populate the earth and in which lived the naguales, or lab, that bound them to their place of origin.
[775] The soul came back to this cave after death. There are as many caves as the number of clans.

614 The children belonged to the paternal clan. A woman who marries does not become a member of the clan of her husband.

/2/ Exogamy is strictly respected; persons belonging to the same clan never marry each other.

[591] The clans are not local, as their members live in all of the places and rancherías.

[178] At present the clans lack chiefs, this institution having dis-
[669] appeared about 30 years ago, according to all our information, when the zone that we are studying underwent a chaotic period due to political revolts.

/2 cont./

614 The chieftaincy of each clan was filled by the oldest man,
887 who was called chunel. (It seems to have the same meaning as
156 the word catinab, but some informants recognized the latter as
the one used in the adjacent municipality of Oxchuc.) The office
was not hereditary, and upon the death of a chunel the oldest man
156 of the clan was venerated as such. The chief of the clan was re-
614 spected and feared, because he was recognized as endowed with
888 supernatural power which, through his lab, he exercised over all
776 the members of the clan. Two informants of advanced age de-
554 fined the chunel as "the oldest one and the greatest sorcerer."
The lab feeds on souls, and a person who has "done wrong" is
776 "eaten" by the lab of the one offended and dies. In this way
761 social control was exercised on and among the members of the
[784] clan, never going beyond the limits of this. The life of the in-
[626] dividual is intimately bound to the life of the lab, or guardian
776 spirit: the death of one brings with it the death of the other. All
the Cancuqueros have their lab, but they hide it and sometimes
[756] deny it. The curer knows which is the lab of the sick person be-
[827] cause he hears it in the pulse. The lab reveals itself in dreams
[787] to "its owner," with whom it speaks because "it is his own com-
pany." One person discovers the lab of another "because he sees
it." The lab takes care of its owner, defends him, and is the in-
178 strument of revenge for an injury unjustly received. Today this
614 concept is intimately bound up with the omniscience of the patron
626 saint; only with the permission of San Juan can a lab "eat" the
776 soul of a chapomal, or "clan brother," and this permission is
granted only in the case when the saint is unfavorably impressed
by the conduct of the individual. In any case the lab never
wreaks its vengeance except for a bad act that would fully justify
614 it according to the social morality. As can be seen, social con-
626 trol was not only rooted in the chief of the clan, but this function
extended to the whole group, as happens at present.

/3/

178 584 614 There are informants who remember the time when there were chuneles, and the younger ones know about it because their fathers have told them. The social conflict brought about by the disappearance of this institution seems to have its most intense point in what concerns marriage. It was the chunel of the clan of a girl to whom the parents of a boy would go to ask for her in marriage. He received gifts and gave his consent in case he thought it advantageous, and, accompanied by the boy and his parents, he went to the house of her parents, to whom he presented the pleas of the young man. No one could oppose the decision of the chunel. An informant adds: "If the woman does not [586] love her husband and leaves him and flees, the man advises the chunel and the chunel eats the woman." She dies if she does not respect the wishes of the oldest man of her clan. Now that there [598] are no chuneles, a boy, with his parents or without them, is accompanied by any member of the clan to which the girl belongs; generally the parents are opposed, the girl is not willing, and the use of force, which serves instead of the traditional fear and reverence, only gives rise to conflicts, bringing irreconcilable hatreds.

614 Formerly the clans of Cancuc were four: Chik, Chejeb, Ijká, and Boj. At present only the first three exist, the members of the Boj clan having been incorporated into the Ijká clan. This fusion of two clans took place a short time before the political revolts to [125] which we have referred. While taking the census of the town, we found marriages between individuals belonging to these two clans, concluded before the fusion. Since that date "the Boj know that they are now Ijká," and clan exogamy has prevented these unions; "If a Boj marries an Ijká now, the two will die," say my informants, "because they are chapomales."

614 539 776 To an inquiry about the reason for the fusion and the manner of accomplishing it, our informants gave the following explanations, which show undeniably the close relationship existing between clan and nagual:

/3 cont./

614 Esteban Santis Pin, of the Ijká clan:
539 Many ants entered the home of the Boj and they asked the
•776 Ijká to lend them a home, and they joined there, becoming like chaponales /sic/ to each other since then. The ants did not enter the homes of the "Christian" (people), but the home of the lab; "the people did not talk it over, only the lab talked it over."

/4/ Mateo López Chij, of the Chik clan:
Lightning hit the home of the Boj "because it is very high on the hill." "The lab left" and they took refuge in the home of the Ijká. The members of the clans know this because it is in the home of the lab where "the chuleles (souls) are brought up." Before there were four homes and now there are three, because since that day the Boj and the Ijká live together. The homes are caves.

Diego Domínguez Tzul, of the Ijká clan:
The Boj were ill and the Ijká went to help them and to cure them. The Boj said: "It is good that we join the Ijká." It was the lab that spoke, not the Christians; "but the lab speak the same as people do, that is why they drank, talked, and gathered together." The people know this because those of them who have lab told them. The Boj were those who wanted the union with the Ijká, "and they said that when the lab became drunk."

Miguel Ordóñez, of the Chik clan:
"The lab of the Boj talked and drank with the lab of the Ijká, and presently they joined. Perhaps someone with a lab dreamed about this and then told it to his companions."

/4 cont./

614 539 776 Juan Jiménez Chan, of the Ijká clan:

It was arranged in the times of the old chuneles, when the lab talked it over, there where they live. The chuneles later heard about it through their lab, and they were in agreement.

Tomás Vásquez Coreta, of the Chik clan:

Ants went into the home of the Boj, and the latter went to the home of the Ijká, where they were very well received, and "all are happy." Only the lab spoke, but the chuneles knew and told it to their chapomales.

Domingo López Uax, of the Boj clan; now of the Ijká:

The lab of the Boj and of the Ijká spoke and all was arranged. "Now they are chapomales and cannot marry."

614 551 197 The surnames in Cancuc determine the clan to which an individual belongs. There are two of them: a native one which is preceded by a Spanish one (except in various exceptional cases in which there is only a Spanish surname). All the Cancuqueros know their native surname, but most of them do not know the Spanish surname with which it is combined. Upon the uttering of a native surname, all know to which clan it belongs, which does not happen with the Spanish one, because these can be placed before native surnames belonging to one, two, or three clans. Therefore we can say that there is exogamy of the native surname, but not /5/ of the Spanish one, which does not seem to have any function with respect to the clans.

551 614 In the lists of surnames that we were able to obtain and which in no way pretend to be exhaustive, we find 20 Spanish surnames and 92 native surnames. These last are distributed among the four clans in the following way: 33 of the Chik clan, 31 of the Chejeb, 21 of the Ijká, and 7 of the Boj (now incorporated into the Ijká clan).

2: Redfield & Villa Rojas E-4,5 (1938) 1939 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

and four *chuycales*, who are in charge of sacred matters. Certain shamans, called *dzunubiles*, also participate in calpul government.

In Cancuc, Villa did not inquire into the matter, but in Oxchuc and in Bachajón the calpules have separate patron-saints and are known, in the case of Bachajón, by the names of San Sebastian and San Geronimo, in the case of Oxchuc, Santo Tomás and La Trinidad. In the church at Bachajón the saints belonging to the north calpul, San Sebastian and two others, stand on the left side of the church, while San Geronimo, San Manuel, and the Virgin, representing the south calpul, stand at the right side. It appears, however, at least in the case of Oxchuc, that the festivals of these saints are maintained by the people of both calpules jointly.

The antagonism between the calpules of Cancuc has expressed itself from time to time in violence. During Villa's stay it was rumored that the people of the southern half were about to attack those of the northern half, and indeed, shots were fired. Blom and LaFarge reported "a dragging feud" in this village.[19] Apparently marriages may and do take place between the calpules; there is no indication, however, that they are exogamous.

In Oxchuc a principal annual ceremony attends the transfer from one calpul to the other of a certain sacred book. This greatly venerated object was, after some reluctance, shown to Villa. He was requested to deliver to its custodians a dozen rockets, some candles, and some incense; he was then allowed to examine it in the presence of the chiefs and the chuycales of both calpules. It is a notebook of twelve paper sheets, 40 by 20 cm. in size, it has a deerskin cover. Of the twelve pages, nine bear writing, all but one on both sides. The text appears to be a series of orders set down by the Spanish authorities in the year 1674. The book is kept in a black wooden box; before and after removing it the chuycales prayed, kneeling, while incense was burned and the rockets were discharged.

The book is called *cannaltic* 'Our Master.' The ceremony of transfer of this sacred object takes place during the thirteen days beginning December 31. The principal members of the government of both calpules, numbering thirteen, assemble in the cabildo. The book is placed on a table with thirteen candles, thirteen rosaries, thirteen calabashes of lime mixed with tobacco, and thirteen vessels of atole. During the thirteen days the men remain segregated in the cabildo without contact with their homes or with women. Many prayers are uttered. At the conclusion of the period the box containing the book is escorted in solemn procession to the place it occupies during the rest of the year—not in the church, but in a special hut on the outskirts of the calpul of La Trinidad.

Information which Villa received from Indians of Chanal on the customs attending marriage differs in a number of respects from the account given by Blom and LaFarge,[20] or supplements that account, and therefore may be summarized here. There are no professional marriage negotiators. The boy's parents pay, ordinarily, four visits to the girl's parents to complete the agreement. On each visit they bring bread, eggs, fruit, and especially rum. The boy is expected

[19] Blom and LaFarge, 1927, 2: 187. [20] *Ibid.*, 2: 158–159.

cf: Redfield & Villa Rojas E-4,3 (1938) 1939 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

796 carried a red banner. At the church the four men performed a dance. Divided into
796 pairs facing each other at a distance of 6 m., they first shook the ribbons on their
535 poles while giving loud cries, varied by putting the hand over the mouth, and running to meet one another. Then they made a slight inclination of the head, turned half around, and returned to their original places. After repeating this thrice, the pairs exchanged places and performed new figures. At the conclusion they surrounded the flag-bearer, shouting and waving the ribbons.

796 Although harp and guitars were here used in an apparently religious dance,
534 in several of the communities it appears that the stringed instruments of European
184 origin (guitar, violin, and harp) are used only for secular purposes, the religious
[177] musical instruments (which are often kept in the church) consisting of cane flute (*ahmay*) and drums. In Chanal two drums are used, a large drum (*kayob*) and a small one (*chin kayob*). In Tenejapa the single drum is called *anteel* and is accompanied by a sort of cornet.

708 Some minor observances having to do with the cult of the saints may be
776 mentioned. In the highland villages it is usual for each important saint to be repre-
184 sented by two images of which one, the genuine santo, is too sacred to be taken
[194] from the church, the other, called *debo* (for *doble*) substitutes for the true santo in religious processions.[36] In Bachajon the care of the church is alternated weekly between the two calpules, on Christmas Eve each church-caretaker (*priora*) must contribute to the decoration of the altar ten little figures of clay, of which five are in the form of a bull and five in the form of a horse and rider. The church at Citala contains many santos of which two (San Mateo and San Gabriel) are painted black and enjoy special prestige. In this church a straw mat, yellow in color with red ribbons interwoven, is used to kneel upon before the principal saints; it is kept with extraordinary care. At Citala a principal annual event is the ritual
778 washing of the saints' clothing. This occurs two weeks after Holy Week. The
776 "Great Washing," when the clothing of the principal saints is washed, is performed
796 at a spring where the water is thought to be of absolute purity. The "Small Washing" of the clothes of the lesser saints may be done in the river. The Great Washing is reported as involving the consumption of eight hogs and a great quantity of rum.

78 Although it is evident that the religion of the Tzeltals contains many pagan
[114] elements, some of which have been reported by Blom and LaFarge,[37] Villa's notes
778 do not add a great deal on this point. The use of hilltop shrines was noted at
782 Oxchuc, where one of these is called Ikal Ahau, apparently after an ancient deity.[38]
776 The teacher at Amatenango reports that the Indians there make offerings for
114 rain at a rock marked with a zigzag thought to represent the lightning. No information was obtained on the beliefs as to *nahuale*; this subject is discussed by Blom and LaFarge.[37]

[36] The image corresponds precisely with that of the pairs of runners used by the Quintana Roo Maya, of which one, the first author has published a description.

[37] Blom and LaFarge, 1927, 2:369-371.

[38] Núñez de la Vega (1702, p. 6) says: "Los de Oxchuc y de otros pueblos de los Llanos veneran mucho al (ídolo) que llaman [illegible] que quiere decir origen principal o señor de negros," as quoted in Becerra (1912, p. 244).

37. Blom and LaFarge, 1927, 2:369-371.

3:Naah E-5 (1964-1965)1967
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[P. 463-B] Teklum

682 these suspicions and kill the witch. If he should
694 kill the witch while the patient is still alive, it
75 is believed that the patient will die.

682 Killing men for cattle theft (six cases) is a
685 relatively recent occurrence. It has put hom-
674 icide on the market: the associations of
[463] cattle-owners have hired killers in three of the
[697] six cases. In addition to the killer's fee, they pay the fine to release him from prison. Fines for homicide have increased in the past five years—from 1,000 to 3,000 pesos—but not sufficiently to price the murder of cattle
[435] thieves out of the market. A good bull is worth 1,500 pesos, and the threat of further loss by theft seems to justify the expenditure of fees
685 and fines. When the cattle-owners lose some
787 of their herd, they go to spiritualists or to San
• 776 Miguel, the talking saint of Ixtapa, to find out who did the stealing. Since such evidence does not hold up in court, legal settlement is not
685 attempted. Legal action, moreover, would
694 create an enemy who might seek revenge. A Ladino secretary of the town center who had lost a bull accused a man of stealing his cattle and demanded 500 pesos in compensation. By receiving the money he jeopardized his safety, and eventually he had to leave town.

The Resolution of the Case

682 It is nearly impossible to find witnesses to
69 homicide. Of these 37 cases, 28 resulted in no action being taken by the authorities, and in five cases where the killers went to jail, they were released with the payment of minimal fines, In the calculations of the townspeople, it is hardly worth risking one's neck to get such a minimal revenge.

682 However, this does not mean that homicide
593 goes unnoticed in the community. After a
626 killing the widow sings of the life of the dead
[683] man. If she is in agreement with the verdict arrived at by the killer and others, she will deny knowledge of what he has done, or even suggest that she too was aware of what harm he has caused (one widow implied that her husband, killed as a witch, was responsible for the death of four of her six children). If she objects to the verdict, she sings of what a good man he was and how blameless. She will then air her own suspicions in the following weeks as to who killed her husband.

682 Following the funeral, when the women
683 have left the cemetary, the men sit at the
627 grave. As they measure out a liter of liquor and pass it around, they advance hypotheses as

[swayobel]." "What one?" asked his friend. "You won't be afraid?" asked J. And then he put his shirt and hat on the floor, spoke three words (my friend didn't say what), and raised his hat and shirt, and a horse appeared. He did this again and a bull appeared. He was a great *?ak'tamal* [witch]. He stole a great deal. He was killed by five bullets.

Such stories of curers "who walk on both sides" (*sbe?en ta ?a mehč*) are favorites in the drinking sessions of Teklum. The power of curers inspires fear, so much so that some of the town presidents have been afraid of putting them in prison.

The open competition between curers serves to undermine the faith of the people in their guardianship function. This function was believed to have been acquired by the leaders from the *me?tiktatik*, the ancestors, who were said to live in a cave in a hill near the town, from which came the progenitors of the present townspeople. To carry out this guardianship function, the animal spirits of the two leading curers roamed the streets at night, when the evil spirits were out, each one remaining within the limits of his own side of the dual division. In this role, the two major curers were called the *me?iltatiletik*, a term derived from the one referring to the ancestors.

The loss of faith in the guardianship function of the curers was coincident with the loss of belief in the presence of the me?tiktatik. Some deny that the me?tiktatik live in the cave anymore, and others say they just appear on the day of their fiesta, the Day of the Cross in the Catholic calendar. This fiesta formerly was an important event in establishing the guardian power of the leader curers, since they were the only ones who dared enter the cave and talk to the ancestors. But this fear and this belief have gone. In 1960 one young man of the pueblo entered the cave on the day of the fiesta, when the curers were "deceiving the people" in claiming that they were talking to the ancestors; the fact that he dared enter the cave indicates an ambient distrust (in part resulting from verbal attacks by the priest, who at that time was gaining more power in the town). By now, on the Day of the Cross the church and civil officials, the women prayermakers, and an assistant of the priest, the *fiscal*, go to the cave, but the curers are no longer present, even as bystanders. The curers have tried to buttress belief in the guardianship of the ancestors by claiming that a nephew of the ancestors is now in residence in

3:Nash E-5 (1964-1965)1967
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The authority of the president, however, depends on the use of legal sanctions of prison sentences and fines imposed by extracommunity enforcement agencies in the departmental capital. The weakness of these sanctions—the fine for homicide is 1,000 to 3,000 pesos or three to five years' imprisonment—means that these threats do not have a controlling effect on people's decisions to act. Homicide, carried out by individuals who feel themselves to be threatened, is a supplementary mechanism for social control. Cast in the idiom of witch-killing, homicide is the quasi-official execution of a community threat.

The breakdown in the former structural controls has not been compensated for by the intervention of extracommunity institutions. Attempts to circumvent killing are made by the priest, who counsels against it, warning that the killer will acquire the sins of the man he kills, and by the talking saint of Ixtapa, whom the Indians consult when they are pressed and who advises them to wait—their enemy will be killed for them. This advice is not sufficient to forestall all killings. Motivated by fear, some men still seek to eliminate the object of their fear.[7] The sense of the guardianship of the ancestors and their intermediaries, the curers, is lost along with the intervention of the civil authorities. The individual reacts, using his own means and trying to get sufficient consensus to avoid reprisal.

III. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Homicide in the community of Teklum can be a statement of the fear of witchcraft, of revenge, or of quasi-official reprisal depending on the circumstances and social relationships involved. Even in this small, self-contained community, homicide does not have a single meaning, analyzable within a single framework of change.

Homicide is part of the expectation pattern of the town. The patterning of the acts of homicide in terms of time, place, and agent makes possible rules of avoidance both in long- and in short-term calculations for survival. The long-range rules require respect behavior to elders, equals, and juniors and the avoidance of abusive or boastful statements. The short-range rules are to avoid walking alone in the woods or milpas far from town, to stay home at night, and to stop drinking.

Despite the grim and expectable outcome of being killed, not all men heed these rules. The love of power and the projection of self into

3:Nash E-5 (1964-1965)1967
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682 183 wider ranges of expression than are usually permitted in the community prompt men to assert the strength of their swayohel, to run races with the animal spirits of others in the assertion of pre-eminence, to boast of their material goods, and to "wake up dead."

682 694 178 578 The increasing rate of homicide is related to the following changes in the community:

(1) Increasing friction resulting both from the introduction of new economic enterprises and from political competition by the recently settled land-reform colonies has introduced a new kind of homicide, in which an opponent is killed either by the person whose interests are threatened or by hired killers. It has also stimulated accusations of witchcraft stemming from envy.

[754] 558

(2) The curers' loss of leadership and of control over entry into the curing profession has led to competition among them and to a loss of respect for their ability to overcome witchcraft. Curers have become the most frequent suspects of being witches.

754 (3) Loss of faith in the guardian ancestors and in the guardianship functions acquired from them by the curers has further undermined the position of the curers as agents of social control. This has aggravated the sense of insecurity and fear, which provokes the uncontrolled use of individual violence.

682 694 178 769 626 (4) The shift of power from the principales to the town president has led to a breakdown in the system of checks and balances exerted by the principales over the curers, and to a direct confrontation of the curers by civil officials.

682 694 178 621 756 (5) In the confrontations of the civil authorities and the curers in the '40's and early '50's, the fact that a witchcraft case was officially reviewed and the killing of the witch sanctioned may have served as a brake on the number of such homicides. Since 1953, when this practice was abandoned, those who have felt themselves or their families to be the victims of witchcraft have been left to their own recourse.

178 578 682 [624] [632] [756] The organizational changes summarized here are provoked by structural changes affecting recruitment into the positions of power and the validation of leadership in the exercise of power. The dual division of the town provided an accepted basis for recruiting

241 paraje perform before the altar of the
782 church in the ceremonial center. All prayers
796 are said in Tzeltal; some are Christian in
[778] origin, others entirely pagan. This prayer
[171] I recorded in 1944:

241
796 Here we come to bring you your food, to
782 light your candles, to play the harp, to play the
539 guitar. Here we come to perform your fiesta,
[534] so you may be happy, so you will not abandon us.

We have already planted the milpas; the seed is already in the soil. Father, do not forsake us; let the rains come properly; let them not be abundant nor deficient. Let there be a little sunshine and a few clouds. Let the soil be happy.

Father, let no hail come; let no wind come; let no locust come; let no harmful animals come; let no robbers come, lest they steal from us and leave us in poverty.

Father, let the year come well; let the corn turn out well; let the beans turn out well. Let there be no sickness, let there be no sorrow. Father, the mouthful has already entered; the word had already entered.

The word "mouthful" refers to all the gifts, "word" to all the prayer.

796 A similar ceremony is the *mukul mixa*
[621] ('great Mass'), organized by members of
[776] each calpul. Each calpul has its own patron
[622] saint and its own chiefs. For this ceremony
[534] many more people gather, for representatives and musicians (flute, drum, harp, and guitar) come from all places. The candles offered as "mouthfuls" are greater in number and size.

778 Household ceremonies follow as the head
78 of the household, in private, prepares the small home altar, where the cross which
[834] protects the home is always found. He adorns it with *juncia* and five candles; he says appropriate prayers at 6 o'clock in the morning or at midday, as he observes fasting and sexual abstinence. These family prayers may be repeated occasionally, depending on the condition of the milpa.

241 At the beginning of the month called
782 [P 202-A]

4: Villa Rojas E-4.5 (1938-1944) 1969
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162 Amatenango del Valle, a community of 2,529 inhabitants, of which 1,470 reside in the town center.

621 The town centers are divided into two sections, called barrios by Ladinos and calpules by Indians (Oxchuc and Cancuc). The imaginary line which separates one barrio from another passes through the center of the town, sometimes east-west, sometimes north-south, with no fixed orientation.

[776] Each barrio has its own local authorities and sometimes its own patron saint (Oxchuc and Bachajon). The principal function of the barrios was not only political or religious but also social, in regulating mar-

[178] riage. Endogamy was common to all barrios, but today that rule is losing its rigidity. In Aguacatenango, B. Metzger (1960, p. 8) tells us that, "The rule of barrio endogamy, which is viable in 86% of the known marriages, contributes to the localization of related families limiting the geographical range of marriage choice." A similar situation obtains in Amatenango (J. Nash, 1959, p. 3), Cancuc (Guiteras Holmes, 1947, p. 7), and Bachajon (Guiteras Holmes, 1961c, p. 167).

[178] In Bachajon, Guiteras Holmes states that: "In the old days there was no marriage be-

[578] tween the *barrios*. If a boy from San Sebastian took a walk through San Geronimo, he was beaten; they would give him a '*maciza*,' as they say. If a boy from a *barrio* approached the waterholes to court a girl, he fared very badly." The calpules of Oxchuc, although they have politico-religious significance, have no influence at all in the selection of wives.

621 The parajes have a few scattered huts
778 among the cultivated fields. Each paraje is
[361] bound by religious ties to a given cave where a cross, the supreme sacred symbol, is kept. The name of the paraje is generally
778 taken from the name of the cave. Sacred
821 caves of secondary importance also exist.
823 This mystical regard for caves is based in the belief that they are the place from which issues the lightning to punish the

[P 205-A]

631 the secretario, who is, without exception, a Ladino, for his responsibilities require a good knowledge of the Spanish language as well as office skills, which the Indians usually lack. Actually it is this official who controls all the administrative affairs of the municipio. He imposes fines, collects taxes, assigns communal work, and keeps in con-
[62] tact with the state authorities. After him rank the regidor, síndico, alcalde, police commander, and policemen.

621 Besides these authorities, which are the officially recognized ones, the Indians have their own government system, which in most places is still operating. Oxchuc is
[888] typical of the regional pattern. There the
[887] municipio is divided into two calpules, each of which is a kind of fraternity under the supervision of those old men having the
● [776] greatest knowledge and prestige. Each cal-
[796] pul has also its own patron saint, venerated with special feasts and ceremonies throughout the year. (In Oxchuc the calpules are not geographically determined, and its members are spread in different parajes of
62 the territory.) Authority is now integrated in the following officials:

1 katinab, supreme chief of the whole calpul
1 okil kabil, "feet and hands" of the preceding, i.e., secretary
2 dzunubiles, supreme "pulsers" or "curers"
1 alcalde, who carries a staff of office
2 cornales (or governors), who also carry staffs of office
2 síndicos, who also carry staffs of office
4 x-tules (or regidores)

555 The four last jobs are reached by strict
624 hierarchy and indicate the progress of each
794 individual in the fulfillment of his social duties. This social-service career begins when the man is not yet married, when he is assigned the cargo of mayordomo of the church, which means that he has to attend to minor affairs connected with the church and to keep it clean. Shortly after his marriage he usually reaches the position of capitán, where he is responsible for the fies-

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794 the calpul must have a powerful nagual, through which they can learn about the private lives of their subordinates. This is usually the way they know who has enough money to pay for a feast, who can occupy special jobs, and which sinners deserve punishment.

Religious Life

The Catholic Cult

177 797 795 795 778 [346] [361] [776] [796] [794] The beliefs and religious practices introduced by Catholic missionaries in the 16th century have been adapted to the aboriginal culture. The largest and most important building of the village is the church, situated on the east side of the ceremonial center. In it are the image of the patron saint of the group, the holy cross, and lesser saints. The most profound ceremonies take place before the altar of these saints, who are looked upon as mediators between God and men, and are performed by the cabildos de misa, dzunubiles, and other elderly men of high rank who know both Catholic and Indian ritual.

346 796 795 [782] During the ceremonies the altar is decorated with flowers and with paper and ribbons of different colors. The floor is covered with pine needles, which give off an agreeable fragrance. Candles and copal are part of every prayer and ceremony, the copal having been used since pre-Hispanic times.

795 782 Common prayers of people who visit the center also have a place. These people have to enter the church and make an offering of candles to the patron saint. The prayers follow a formal pattern but vary in content according to the need and mood of the suppliant. Each individual talks intimately to the saint, specifying the help he needs, much as he would to a relative or a friend in whom he has absolute confidence. The two most frequent matters of petition are health and food; as the latter depends almost entirely on the condition of the cornfield, people pray that "it may not be damaged by the wind, or by cold, sun, birds, or plagues."

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795 782 In most of the prayers, Dios Tatik Jesucristo and the 13 *fiadores* who are in heaven are mentioned. These 13 fiadores are God's immediate helpers and correspond to the [778] Christian saints. The cross is venerated as a representation of God wherever a prayer is said and so appears on the family altar, on mountaintops, in caves, at fountains, at entrances to the town, at the four corners of the plaza, and in front of the church.

795 778 776 177 The local character of Catholicism is seen in the Masses offered to the mountain called Ikal Ajau, near the ceremonial center of Oxchuc. The Indians say that it is a "living mountain" and give it great reverence, for Ikal Ajau was the name of the idol venerated by Oxchuc people in pre-Hispanic times. In almost all the municipios the saints are dressed as Indians. Towns with a large Ladino population have different saints for the Ladinos, who are dressed as Ladinos and to whom the Indians are completely indifferent, even to forgetting the names of them.

795 184 776

Fiesta for the Patron Saint

796 794 One of the major events in the religious life of the Indians is the annual fiesta in honor of the patron saint and the other saints kept in the church. The capitán principal and some of his immediate assistants are in charge of the organization and expenses of these fiestas. The length and cost of the fiesta correspond to the importance [435] of the saint and range from one day and 100 pesos to four days and several thousand pesos, like the one for the patron saint. To become a capitán principal a man must go through all the ranks and be able to afford the expenses of any fiesta, from a small one to the very large ones of the patrons.

796 The fiesta of the patron of each village is similar to that for any other saint but larger. There are Masses and other religious observances in the church, processions with the image of the saint along the main streets, large meals at the house of the cargoholders, and, above all, constant drink-

[P 221-B]

[Text continues on p. 222-B]

Villa Rojas E-4.5 (1938-1944) 1969
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796 ing in and out of church. From the second day on, everybody is drunk, including women and young people. The sound of skyrockets is heard continuously and marks the gaiety of the people.

An important part of the ceremony at the church is to clean carefully the face of the saint and to change his clothes for new or at least clean ones so that he can be happy during his fiesta. Another act is to take his [1788] image from the main altar to carry it in pro- 796 cession. This is important because there is 796 danger that the patron of other villages may come to steal his power and he would then lose influence over the crops: the saint of Oxchuc helps the growth of corn, the one of Cancuc protects the cotton, and so on. To avoid this danger a substitute image is put in his place while the real one is taken out.

[P 222- B]

796 This substitute is called *gelol*, the same im-
796 age but smaller, which is kept next the original one.

[788] During the procession the saint is carried
[782] in a litter. Incense is burned before him,
[533] while music with drums and flutes is played.

Traditional Ceremonies

796 There are other ceremonies held in the
[777] parajes which, although based on Christian
[778] ritual (including some of the prayers, presence of the cross, candles, etc.), still manifest ancient aboriginal traditions. Among
[776] these ceremonies is the one made before the house altar to Chulmetic (the earth goddess), to God, to Tatik Jesucristo and the 13 Fiadores del Cielo, for the soul of one newborn, to guard against sicknesses or bad influences of any kind. This ceremony is

[P. 222-C]

796 "sembrar el alma del niño" and must be performed by the dzunubiles and the cabildos de misa. A similar devotion is made to Uch, [796] the supernatural being connected with the growth of the cornfield mentioned earlier.

782 778 Also important are the prayers said by families before the cross of the ancestors, in the sacred caves.

Finally, certain prayers and offerings are made to particular lakes considered sacred because they are inhabited by virgins who look after the well-being of the people. The best known, of these lakes is Bañabil in Tenejapa. Some day during the year, a small box containing a woman's dress and all its ornaments is thrown into the water. The dress must be made by a virgin or an old woman.

787 776 [177] *Talking Saints*

Another religious form where Indian tradition is manifested through Christian formulae is the veneration of the talking saints, a widespread cult among the Tzeltal and Tzotzil. These saints are always private property and are usually kept in a small case on the house altar. The believers go to the house of those who own a talking saint and ask him about any secret problem that might require a special knowledge to be solved. Although any saint can be asked, the most popular one is San Miguelito. In order to consult him, people have to tell his owner their problems. The owner, who supposedly is the only one who can understand his saint, talks to him behind a curtain so that no one can see him. Often the owner of a talking saint succeeds in creating a cult out of the saint's box, making a special altar for him and asking the believers for frequent offerings and prayers. Sometimes there is no box, so the effigy is placed on an altar and concealed by a curtain when the private dialogue takes place.

There have been cases, however, in which the talking saints exceed their function as oracles and advise people on political matters. This is why some talking saints have

[P. 223-A]

787 776 been taken away by the local authorities and sent to the Indians' Affairs Office in San Cristobal.

Life Cycle

842 183 *Pregnancy and Childbirth*

The strongest desire of every Tzeltal couple is to create a numerous family, preferably boys. The relationship between sexual intercourse and pregnancy is well understood among the Indians. They know that pregnancy lasts nine months and they keep a good count of it. On the other hand, there are ideas about the possibility of the woman being influenced by old men or "the owners of the nagual," who can interrupt pregnancy and change the fetus from one woman to another. This is why a woman who thinks she is pregnant for three or four months suddenly realizes that she carries nothing any more, while another one, maybe her neighbor, finds herself in advanced pregnancy, giving birth a few months later. It is to be stressed, however, that these changes can take place only among married women.

843 [833] 843 789

844 [81] In conservative villages (Tenejapa, Oxchuc, Cancuc) there is no professional midwife. Children are delivered by the oldest women in the neighborhood.

[757] [237] When labor begins, the first thing is to give the mother a beverage made of powdered opossum tail dissolved in boiling water. It is very common for Indians to have a dry tail hanging next the fireplace. The woman kneels at labor, facing the midwife. The husband's belt or the woman's rebozo is tied very tightly around the upper part of the abdomen to prevent the child from "going up again." The mother can also help herself by seizing a rope tied to the roof, or taking firm hold of any post of the house. The umbilical cord is chopped with a machete or cut with scissors, supported on an ear of corn. This ear is afterwards used as seed and is considered very fertile.

[241] [824]

[757] When labor has finished, the mother is given another hot beverage of pepper,

[P 223-B]

844 cloves, and corncake, to keep her "warm
[757] and fertile." The placenta can be burned,
[842] thrown to the dogs, or deeply buried in case
the mother does not want another preg-
[789] nancy soon. The umbilical cord is put under
a three-stone fireplace if the baby is a girl,
on top of a tree if it is a boy so that he may
become brave and agile when adult.

846 A few hours after childbirth, at the latest
515 the next day, both mother and child take a
temascal (steam bath). Some women stay
in the temascal until they feel completely
recovered.

Childhood and Adolescence

789 During the first weeks of life, children are
774 in danger of losing their souls because their
inexperience makes them an easy prey to
the naguales and bad spirits who wander
around. As protection, mothers place a small
[237] piece of beeswax at the back of the child's
head or tie, as a bracelet, a red or blue
thread around the wrist. If none of these
precautions are taken, the mother has to
cover with branches the paths her child
walks, so that his soul can easily find its way
in case he loses it.

789 Because of all these dangers, fathers al-
852 ways try to perform the ceremony of "seed
774 the soul of the child" as soon as possible. It
[553] is during this ceremony that the child is
given a name, later confirmed according to
[608] Catholic ritual at the ceremonial center. A
very important aspect of the ceremony is
selection of the godparents.

753 *Sickness and Death*

776 Most sicknesses come from infection or
[888] malnutrition. To the natives, however, ill-
nesses have a supernatural cause and are
ascribed either to the anger of gods and
spirits or to old people who have a nagual
or who can throw a spell. The most frequent
explanation is that naguales or supernatural
beings are acting against people. They can
adopt human or animal form or appear as

[P 224-A]

753 thunder, wind, or lightning. All the men
• 776 who occupy or have occupied cargos in the
[794] political or religious organization are sup-
[888] posed to have a nagual, as do the older
[613] members of the lineage. They consider it their duty to punish those members of the group who have sinned and use their nagual, who can devour the soul of the victim little by little.

774 According to this idea, everybody has two
776 souls: one which can be eaten by the naguales, and one which follows the destiny that its patron saint has planned for it.
761 When death comes, the naguales take away
775 the first soul and have a banquet up in the
776 mountains. In this feast, the naguales of the old people of the clan participate, joined by others induced to comradeship.

761 It is a widespread belief that at midyear
773 the naguales go to a place in heaven called
776 Atimaltik, where an old man who possesses the Book of Life lives. Since in this book he keeps account of the time each person can live, it is a source of information for the naguales, who thus can know who is close to death. When the signature of a person disappears from the book, this means that the person died.

764 People have to keep watch over the body for two days and two nights. It is placed on a wooden plank in the middle of the house after being washed or just given a change of clothes. Two candles are placed at the head. At night friends and neighbors come to keep company with the family. They play harp and guitar and drink chicha and aguardiente. At dawn, the men go home and the women remain crying near the corpse.

[613] Following the ancient custom, the dead
[184] are buried near the graves of other men of the same lineage. In Cancuc, however, dead are buried inside the house.

The bottom and sides of the grave are covered with slabs to form a coffin. The corpse, bundled up in a petate, is placed inside. His clothes and other articles he may

[P 224-B]

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

The performance continued until late that night and began again the next morning. Later in the day the banners were carried to the chapel in procession, with music, and deposited by the altar. The *caporales* led in prayer. The fiesta went on again in the evening.

Christian forms are applied to or mixed with non-Christian rites and ideas to some extent, a confusion resembling the appeal to both saints and native gods in prayer among tribes of Guatemala* and British Honduras.† Much of Christianity is adapted to conform to old, fundamental native concepts.

In the church at Bachajon Village there are fourteen saints beside the tribal patron, St. Jerome. These others each have a special care, as the cornfield, hunting, the rivers, etc., and are prayed to for help in their particular provinces. They are given gifts of cloth, usually red or blue, which is draped about them. Many of them duplicate the functions of non-Christian "guardians," to be described below.

In this connection it may be mentioned that the Zotzil-speaking Indians of Huistan are accustomed to beat their saint (St. Martin) when they have a bad year, and to caress him and anoint him with oil when things go well. We were told that he had lost his nose and both ears due to this practice.

One prayer was dictated to us by Señor Cruz at Toniná, the full text of which is given in Appendix VI, Text I. It is primarily meant for a poor man when making his offering in the cornfield, a use which is indicated by the phrase "health of the earth," but it may also be used in church. The phrase "blood of my flesh" suggests a remniscence of the ancient Maya offerings of blood from the ear, tongue, etc. A free translation is given here.

PRAYER OF A POOR MAN WHO HAS NOT MUCH TO OFFER.

"Do Thou accept, in the name of our protector God of the blessed land, what I have gained, and what I have not gained. Do Thou forgive, in the name of our protector God of the blessed land, blood of our flesh; our hearts are open, our lips are open. Give health of the earth; protect thy son kneeling here."

Of primary interest to us were the survivals of the old worship. At the time of the Conquest the Spaniards put forth their utmost efforts to suppress the native religion, and the process has gone on

*Sapper, 1925.
†Gann, 1918.

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

778 left-hand fork ended shortly. The right-hand one went on to a small
178 level place, on which about four people could squat at once. The roof was too low to stand. In the end wall a block of rock about half a meter high and twenty centimeters broad stuck out. In front of it were eight small candlesticks in a row, a neat bundle of fir tips laid before each. More of these extended in an arc to the right, and there was a pile of spare tips and candlesticks at one side. Behind this was a square of bark resting on two stones, which showed signs of having had incense burned on it.

The second cave was more open, more of a room, high, and broken with pillars of limestone and dirt. It was caused partly by hollowing out limestone through the action of water, and partly by washing out the soil. In a quite open situation a small, square cross was leant against a rock. There was a flat board for incense, with five candlesticks on the side of the cross, and fir tips around the other three sides (see fig. 310 c).

These two caves, whether or not they were used in pre-Conquest days, do definitely represent the survival of a purely non-Christian manner of worship.

The general attitude of the Indians towards all the carvings of the Old People is not without interest. While they appear to attach no particular significance to the temples, they call all idols by the generic term of "santo." Thus the fine bas-relief found near San José Reforma, told of in the last chapter, was known to the natives as *Santo Ton*, "Saint Stone," or "Holy Stone."

782 Distinct from worship at these archaeological sites are the offerings made to the "guardian," *yaHwal*, of the cornfields, a pure old Maya rite carried on in the modern fields. This is purely family matter, at which the head of the family officiates. A cross is set up, *atole* or *cocoposole* (*posole* with cocoa and sugar) and rum are offered in bowls, candles and incense are burned, and a chicken killed. The prayer quoted on page 365 is recited at this time. The offerings are only made at the time of planting the *milpa* in the spring, and suffice also for the fall *tonamil*. As nearly as we could find out, each field has its particular guardian, an idea which was shown by the case, to be described later when speaking of magic, of a man who took steps to gain the consent of a field's guardian before putting a curse on it.

• 776 [323] There is a guardian of the river, *yabahen*, and of the mountains, *hun ahau*. This last is of particular interest, corresponding as it does with the old Maya day-name signifying chief. Hun Ahau is mentioned in Landa, page 200, edition of 1864, as ruler of Mitamnal or hell. As Hunahpu he may be referred to in the Popol Vuh. Two

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

fragments of prayers to him will be given when discussing medicine. Distinct from the guardian of the cornfields, he is known only by name to the ordinary Indians, and mention of him appeared to alarm them a good deal.

Drunkenness still retains some of its old, ceremonial significance, in its association with fiestas, funeral rites, and particularly with medicine, under which head it will be more fully taken up.

There are a number of beliefs and practices, no matter what their origin, which, as they exist today, must be considered as superstitions rather than religion. Of such a type is the belief mentioned when speaking of hunting, that painting the bullet red would make it go further. This is of interest in the study of survivals, in view of the importance of the colour red in pre-Christian times. It may be equally well argued, however, that the red in this case represents the blood of the animal to be slain. Most of the superstitions are concerned with the *nagual* or the soul.

The set of ideas that constitute Nagualism is derived from ancient and important beliefs. The *nagual*, *tcul-el* (*tcul*, "holy," *-el* "the, the one"), is a companion-spirit to a man, taking the form of some animal. The stronger the *nagual*, the stronger the man, thus one with a jaguar for a familiar could work any kind of magic or other harm on one with a rabbit. We were told both that the *nagual* was assigned by popular consent, due to people's opinion of a man, and that it was seen in a dream. A man who has a quarrel with another will deliberately shoot animals of the species of the other's *nagual*, hoping to hit the particular one associated with his enemy. If that one dies, the man dies, and vice versa. Thus, it is plain that there is no idea of association with a whole class of animals, but only with one individual of a class.

According to Nuñez de la Vega,* in the seventeenth century the *nagual* was assigned by a shaman, who took it from the name of the day on which the individual was born. The child was later caused to see his *nagual* . . . "*se abrazan cariñosamente con su nagual, que por arte diabólica se le apparece muy doméstica y supersticiosamente cariñosa, aunque sea una bestia muy feroz, como leon, tigre, etc.*"† According to Sapper (1925) exactly the same practices obtain in Guatemala today, the animal being caused to appear by means of hypnotism.

It is possible that further investigation would show a similar manner of choosing the *nagual* among the modern Tzeltal. How-

*Nuñez de la Vega, 1702, loc. cit.
†Extract in Paniagua, 1908, Page 87.

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

796 178 However, much hinges on the difficult question of whether or not they still possess the old calendar, without which the divination would be impossible. This will be spoken of again. On the whole, the Tzeltal do not show anything like the robust survivals of old religion that are found in Guatemala; in this respect, also, they have retained only a degenerated form.

• 776 756 Concerning the attitude of the Indian towards his *nagual*, two stories may be told that have a certain interest. The first is an incident which occurred to us at Cacate-el, the ranch of Señor Tovilla in the Bachajon country. A Bachajon came in to complain that another Indian was casting spells on his fields and chickens. The other had taken a piece of dirt from his cornfield, so as "to gain consent of the guardian" (see above). He was making the corn wither and the chickens die. His power lay in his *nagual*, a *leon colorado* (*saxal-tzoq*), the most powerful that one can have. The Indian who complained had some much weaker familiar. We gave him a brilliant chromo of Saint Jerome with his lion; not only because St. Jerome is the patron of the Bachajon, but also because of the lion, obviously to him the Saint's *nagual*, which anyone could see was larger and more powerful than any known to the Indians. With this picture set up in his house, he felt that he could rest in safety. [123]

Señor Tovilla also passed on to us a story told him for true by an educated and trustworthy upper-class Mexican, an *abogado* (somewhat corresponding to the English solicitor). It is interesting for showing what is commonly believed even by the European people, although somewhat hard to accept. This man stopped at a Bachajon house, wherein he saw two old men sitting with their backs to each other, and two dogs fighting furiously on the floor. When he asked why they did not stop the fight, one of them answered:

"Our *naguales* are in those dogs, and my friend (*sic*) and I are fighting."

He went on to relate that, after the dogs gave up from exhaustion, both the men's faces were covered with black and blue marks.

[829] The Indians and their medicine men have succeeded to a remarkable degree in impressing the Ladinos with the reality and power of their magic, although it seems to be generally felt that it can only be used against themselves. Several very extraordinary stories were told to us by trustworthy people of more than the usual intelligence, and we were occasionally surprised at the reluctance of educated Ladinos to give information concerning native shamanism.

Because of the close relationship, the Indians try to keep secret their *nagual* lest an enemy should start hunting for it. Moreover,

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

to admit to having a weak one would admit weakness in magic and all other things, and set one's enemies immediately to work with the certainty of success.

Although the idea prevails among the Ladino people of Chiapas that the *nagual* and the soul are the same, in reality they are quite distinct. The soul, *lap*, is conceived of as a separate possession, distinct also from the principle of life, both in its conception and etimologically ("life"—*kucul*). This soul is a delicate thing, easily lost, and the object of many ceremonial precautions. Apparently it dwells within the body, but may be jarred loose, or lost in whole or in part.

Apropos of this, the Yocotan curse, given in Volume I, Chapter VI, a prayer to get hold of a man's soul, shows a similar idea. The damage is not done by catching the soul, but by the magic that may be worked on the man after it is caught. Save for the immortality which the Indian enjoys through it after death, his soul may be regarded as much more of a liability than an asset.

If an Indian falls down, the shock of the fall loosens his soul. He must lie where he is until his companions, or the next comers, place a circle of little crosses of grass about him. They then sweep up the trail behind him, gathering the dust and placing it in a heap by his head. On this the grass crosses are burned, and the Indian, inhaling the smoke, regains his soul.

It should be mentioned that these are a very sure-footed people, who seldom fall, and that no importance is attached to falling down when intoxicated.

In case of severe fright, the soul is also thought of as jarred loose. To cure this, an egg or a chicken is buried at the spot where the fright occurred. There is some idea of fright being caused by a spirit that must be placated, an idea which is differently expressed in a custom described as common among the Chol Indians near Palenque. With them, if a child is frightened; the mother beats it soundly, meantime crying "Go away, devil, go away, devil!" (*Que sale el diablo!*") In this case fright is definitely a form of possession. It is part of a conception found among many of the Mayance tribes that there is something unnatural and supernatural about a sudden shock of this sort. Being startled must be distinguished from merely being afraid of something, which is considered entirely natural and comprehensible.

On the trail the Indians sleep on beds of palm leaves which take an impression of the sleeper's body. Before going on, these leaves must be shaken out, and should also be held over the smoke of the

7t Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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pact settlement with the emphasis on the bilateral kinship group. The authority of the elders in settling conflicts in the family and the community is weakened, although the hierarchy remains intact. In religious institutions, the personnel has remained the same, but the authority of the religious officials has weakened and the belief in the deities and ancestral figures has been undermined.

Political leadership is the most dynamic area of change. The power of the *principales* had already been taken over by young civil officials when I first went to the town in 1957. The curers, who retained the power derived from belief in their control over the supernatural, were the core of resistance to change in the decade that I knew the community. But this control was being challenged by civil officials and factional leaders, who were aware of its repressive effect. The dynamic aspect of the political sector is linked to the fact that the new leaders saw the necessity of seizing power from those who were privileged in the traditional society. They were reworking the social structure to pave the way for the acceptance of development opportunities being offered by the national government.

In Chapters 10, 11, and 12 I have summarized the structuring of behavior in roles, place, and time and described how these patterns have been affected by change. The following questions are raised in the summary chapters:

1. The role system: How are people recruited into roles? How are roles coordinated? How are performances evaluated? The matrix of roles provides the patterned expectations of what others will do in a given situation. Some of the decisions made in assigning people to roles allow little room for choice. In other cases, new functions, such as those imposed upon governing officials, have replaced traditional bases for making decisions and in turn upset the balance of power between elders, curers, and leaders in civil office. (Continuity and change in the role structure are analyzed in Chapter 10.)

2. The setting: How is appropriate behavior defined for each institutional setting? What kinds of behavior are replicated in each setting? How are changes in role relations reflected in positions assumed in each setting? Observations of behavior in the church and the

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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Chapter 1

Spirits and Places

Social space is the cognitive pattern of relationships imposed upon any terrain. In Amatenango del Valle[1] there are two superimposed patterns. One is defined by the nation for the purposes of political administration. This follows the pattern of colonial administration of *municipios*, or townships, with a *cabecera*, or administrative center, containing the church, town hall, and school house, and serving a number of colonias and *rancherias*, local hamlets or nuclei of populations. The other pattern is defined by the inhabitants using Tzeltal terminology or a Tzeltal rendition of a Spanish name. In this pattern, domains of good and bad spirits are defined, and behavior appropriate to each place is specified in myths and rituals. Persistence of this pattern has had profound implications for continuity of pre-Conquest culture. It provides a ground plan for the system of social control and security exercised by the old gods and their human intermediaries.

In the following section, I will discuss first territorial divisions defined by national law and modified by indigenous categories, and then the interaction between the spirits of persons and places.

The Territorial Divisions

The township of Amatenango del Valle is located at 92°30′ longitude and 16°30′ latitude in the highland zone of the state of Chiapas. The town center is located no more than fifty yards from the Pan-American Highway twenty-five miles southeast of the departmental capital of San Cristóbal.

1. I use the national designation derived from Nahuatl, Amatenango del Valle, to refer to the township, and the Tzeltal term Tzo'ontahal to refer to the center.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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ties to the center. They register births and deaths in the township center, but they do not have any representation in the cabildo. The populations have no identification with Indian subgroups, speak Spanish, and are oriented to the regional rather than the local economic center. The plantations remaining in the area, classified as *ranchos* in the national census, employ Indians from the center. Their only relationship to the central authority is to get help in recruiting additional laborers. Recruitment of labor is no longer coercive as it was prior to the 1930s when the low wage rate could not attract the help needed. Announcements of the need for workers are made by the president on the loudspeaker system of the town, and men voluntarily go to the plantations.

Spirit Domains

The link between people and place is through the media of the spirits (*ɬ'uleletik*) of persons and of locale. The relationship is maintained through a set of rules governing the behavior among spirits of people and of places. These rules derive from myths and stories of encounters which define the character of the spirits in each of the domains. Danger is localized in a series of caves which are avoided. Benevolent, or guardian, spirits inhabit a different set of sites, where ceremonies are conducted that maintain the well-being of the individual and of the community. By locating and circumscribing places of danger and guardianship, the members of the community can supplicate helpful spirits and avoid evil; they are delivered from fear of the unknown and provided with a rationale for dealing with fear of the known.

The places where spirits meet are outlined in Table 3. The first group includes spirits which are supplicated, the second, dangerous spirits which are avoided or approached only by powerful persons.

The house spirits. The spirits of inhabitants and of the house meet at the center post at the rear wall of the house. The spirit of the house lives in this post. Those who claim to have seen the house spirit say he is a small Ladino child. He is capricious, and if he is not happy, he may admit the evil spirits who will eat the souls of the inmates. His appe-

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342 tite must be satisfied when the house is first occupied and when the chil-
776 dren of the house fall ill from a sickness diagnosed by a curer as a result of
753 their souls being eaten. The souls of the inmates of the house hover near the center post when they are not in the body. The soul calling ceremony
342 is held near this center post. If someone is cured in a house not his own,
755 he must not sit near this post because his soul will be confused with those of the inmates of the house. The curing arch is erected directly before the center post, over the square hole in which the ceremonial offering of a sheep's head is buried when the house is built. A live chicken is buried in this spot if the illness is severe.

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769 TABLE 3. Spirits and Places

Place	*Place spirit*	*Person spirit*
Loci of spirits to be supplicated		
House	Spirit of the house (*sc'ulel na*)	Spirits of children (*sc'uleletik yuntikil*)
Spring of San Nicolás	Little Ladino (*c'in kailan*)	Spirits of male patients (*sc'uleletik yu?un keremetik*)
Spring of Pahaltón	Little Ladina (*c'in linlan*)	Spirits of female patients (*sc'uleletik yu?un ?ac'iletik*)
Cave of Ancestors	Lopez brothers (*Suntonetik*)	Spirits of townspeople (*sc'uleletik spisil teklum*)
Loci of spirits to be avoided		
Cave of Don David	Ladino moneylender (*Klabil*)	Petitioners for wealth
Cave of the Black Man	Devil, or black man (*?ihk'al winik*)	Witches
Cave of Juan Santos	Deceased recipient of wealth from Cave Hwan Santil	Petitioners for wealth
Stone Cave	Owner of cave (*Yahwal sc'en*)	Petitioners for wealth
Cave of Elotes	Owner of cave (*Yahwal sc'en*)	Petitioners for wealth
Cave of the Star	Owner of star (*Yahwal ?ek'*)	Curers and witches

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The four sides of the square house are protected by palm crosses which were nailed to each of the four corner posts during the ceremony of the initiation of the house. These crosses prevent the entry of evil. A fifth cross on the door post, replaced each year on the Day of the Cross, ensures the guardianship of San Pedro the Martyr, the Lord of Lightning.[5]

The idea of the similarity in substance between a house and its inmates originates in the notions about soil (*lum*) and mud (*ʔač'al*). An origin myth concerning the creation of man indicates that God created man out of soil and this mythical identification is reiterated in prayers when the fleshy part of the body is referred to as *hlumeletik*, our soil, and *kač'aletik*, our mud. Whatever soil man comes into contact with—in his house, in the backyard, or in his travels, may contain some of his soul. This belief is demonstrated in the following practices: When a person's soul is lost because of a fright, such as falling or "seeing a spirit," the soil where the incident occurred is scraped into a shirt or skirt belonging to him and deposited in the soil below the head of his bed. Some older informants say that the soil from beneath the bed is scraped up and deposited in the coffin of a deceased inmate of the house, but I have never seen this done. This intimate relation between soul and soil was best illustrated to us when our landlord refused to let us put a cement floor in the interior of his house since it would interfere with the practices described above and other customs in the house ceremonies mentioned below.

The house is constructed in two stages. The completion of each stage requires a ceremony linking the spirits of the inmates to that of the dwelling. The first stage is the erection of the house posts and the wooden frame. When the roof is covered with wood shingles, thatch, or tile, the family may set up temporary walls of boards. They wait until the rainy season to complete the second stage of building up the walls with mud. The first ceremony, called "fiesta for the house," is for "the spirit which resides in the posts," and the second, called "meal for the house," is to feed "the spirit of the house earth." People believe that the mud walls, like their fleshy counterpart, the human body, require nourishment.

5. San Pedro Martyr is referred to by the Indians as *Tatik Martil* and is identified with the pre-Conquest deity Lord of Lightning, or *Tatik Ča?uk*.

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spring. The gourd is used as a container for the springwater because, like all growing plants and unlike metal or glass containers, it has a soul. The soul of the tobacco plant is considered particularly strong. The smoke of the candles and incense are the media through which prayers to the spirit of the house are transmitted.

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The house fiesta serves three functions: (1) introducing the spirit of the house inmates to the house spirit, (2) creating a harmonious setting for spiritual interaction of the members of the household and the house spirit, (3) protecting the house against the intrusion of evil. The introduction is achieved by brushing the household members with the branches from the spring, and the harmony is brought about by drinking liquor, playing the guitar, and dancing. The music of the seed gourd, the guitar, and sometimes a radio or phonograph makes the residents, their guests, and the house spirit happy, or "of one heart." Protection is insured by nailing the palm crosses representing the Lord of the Lightning to the house posts.

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Second house fiesta ("meal for the house"). When a meal is given to the spirit of the house earth, the house is arranged as for the house fiesta with curing arches set in front of the center posts at the back and middle walls. The same guests are invited as for the first fiesta. The family buys a sheep and slaughters it in the morning by stringing it up to the center post by it paws and slashing its jugular vein. When the blood has drained into the square hole opened at the base of the center post, the curer removes the head and buries it in the hole. Some curers bury the four paws as well, while others prefer to add an offering of five pieces of bread in a new pottery jar, twenty measures of chocolate, thirteen cigarettes, and a bottle of liquor covered with a new cloth. The head of the sheep is placed so that the eyes look up to watch over the inhabitants. Some refer to it as the *me?iltatil*, identifying it with the curers (who are called me?iltatil in the context of guardianship) and thus with the ancestor guardians.

During the house fiesta I observed in July 1967, an old curer who had officiated at the first ceremony served again. A neighbor, who was not related to the houseowners but who was skilled in butchering, slaughtered

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the animal. The curer received from him the severed head and paws which he placed in a large gourd. Then the curer served a potion of herbs in springwater to all of the members of the household. The final ritual act was for the curer to smoke an article of clothing belonging to each member of the household over the incense burning in front of the center arch at the back wall. Liquor was served continually throughout the ceremony, the first drink always being given to the curer followed by one to the elder houseowner. The first drink was served immediately after the cutting of the jugular vein of the sheep. Flowing blood, water, and liquor are spirit media symbolically linked in ritual behavior. Between each of the major ritual acts—the slaughtering of the sheep, the burial of the head, the serving of the springwater and herbs, and the smoking of the clothing with incense—the curer prayed, but his prayers were so mumbled that I could not hear or record them. Informants said that it was a variation of the prayer given at the first house fiesta. After the rituals, a stew made with the sheep meat was served with tortillas to all the visitors. The music of guitar and gourd rattle, played during the ritual by young male relatives continued after the meal, and the guests remained in the house drinking and dancing for the rest of the afternoon.

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Elements of these house fiestas are repeated when any of the children of the household is ill. A severe illness, diagnosed as being caused by the devil eating the soul of the patient, requires offering a meal to the house spirit. The square hole is reopened, and a live black chicken, male if the patient is a boy and female if it is a girl, is placed inside. A food offering of one-fourth liter of liquor, one peso's worth of bread, and 50 cents' worth of chocolate is placed inside with the chicken, and a square board is fitted on top of the hole "to keep the chicken alive for eight days so that the house spirit will hear his cries." When the curing arch is removed, the hole is filled in with dirt over the chicken, now dead, which provides a meal for the spirit house earth.

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When the houseowner is sick, an appeal for health is made to the spirit in the house post. The members of the household kiss the post, a splinter is removed and burned in an incense burner with *pom*, the resin of pine. This odor is pleasing to the house spirit.

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When a serious illness caused by witchcraft has been cured, the patient

18 When a serious illness caused by witchcraft has been cured, the patient must be protected against reentry of the evil by a gift of medicine to the house. Palm crosses are made for the corner posts and the entry, and a medicine consisting of a mixture of garlic and creosote, the seeds of mustard, and *poštan*, a "hot" herb, is mixed. As the crosses are nailed on the posts, the curer marks a cross with the medicine over the palm cross. This "covers the eyes of the evil spirit" so that it will not enter the house. In the Eyes of the Ancestors 789

776 342 The relationship between house spirit and the spirits of the residents is an uneasy one. Fear is associated with this capricious spirit, who might make an alliance with evil spirits, and whose power is evident only in sickness and in death, never in good deeds. A sense of alienation is conveyed in the fact that the house spirit and the spirits of the spring are conceived of as Ladinos. Spirits of the house and of the landscape are exacting landlords from whom the tenants expect nothing in return for their offerings but freedom from harm. Acceptance of the offerings seals a contract between spiritual occupants that must continually be renewed in order to maintain the balance of security expressed in the phrase "to be of one heart." The payment of a "tribute" in the form of food, liquor, and entertainment is part of a larger strategy by which these Indians ensure their survival by appeasement of overlords, demanding government officials, and the very rats which live in their houses and feed on the corn they store in the eaves. [782] [557] [571] [782]

708 212 *The springs.* Other meeting grounds for the spirits of people and places are the springs. The major spring, San Nicolás, is located on the southwestern periphery of the town. It provides drinking water and water for irrigating the cultivated lands. A second spring, called Pahaltón, lies closer to the village and provides a smaller stream of water directed into the canals irrigating the fields of the center. Some say the spirit of San Nicolás is a small Ladino boy; others say he is a man. The spirit of Pahaltón is a female non-Indian, or *Ladina*. The spirits of these waters are able to effect miraculous cures for patients who have lost their souls or those who are of two hearts because of upset social relations in the home. Male patients are brought to San Nicolás and female patients are brought to Pahaltón to seek a miracle. In the curing ceremony an arch of flowers entwined in pine boughs is constructed as closely as possible to the spring [776] 708 312 755

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The curers used to go up to the cave with the alfereces, the mayordomos *[religious officials], the prayer reciters, and the people of the village. When they arrived there, the mayordomos played the guitar and gourd rattle. They lit candles and incense, and the leading curers would go inside the cave. All the people contributed money for the liquor and candles which was collected by the officials. They said that they spoke to the ancestors inside, where there was a lake and a beautiful field. They asked for rain and good crops. They would come out and tell the people waiting outside what the ancestors had said.*

Then one year [in 1957] during the fiesta of the cave, the curers went into the cave. The people said to the curers, "We want to see the owners." The curers said they would come out, but they didn't. The people waited and waited. A boy went inside with the curers. They tried to prevent him, saying, "Won't you be afraid?" He said, "No, let's go in." They entered twenty feet inside the door. The curers said, "Let us stay here." The boy asked them where was the river, the lake, and the milpa that were supposed to be inside. The curer replied, "It is all a lie. Now you know; don't tell the people." But when he came out, the boy told the people it was all a deception.

Since the late 1950s the ritual has changed. The curers no longer officiate, nor do they enter the cave and speak to the ancestors as they did formerly. The *fiscal,* or assistant to the priest, leads the mayordomos, alferreces, and prayer-reciters to the cave on the Day of the Cross and simply replace the palm cross at the entrance to the cave just as they do with the palm crosses fixed to the wooden crosses marking the roads leading into the town. The curers have attempted to revive the belief in the presence of the ancestors by saying that their nephew is in residence now, but no one I ever spoke to believes this. Most people agree that the ancestors live permanently in Chiapa de Corso.[9]

The hill and cave owners. While people try to maintain a good relationship with the spirits of the house, of the springs, and of the Cave of the Ancestors, they avoid the dangerous spirits of the hills and caves

9. A similar myth concerning the departure of the ancestors to go live in Chiapa de Corzo exists in Pinola (Hermitte 1964).

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which have the power to mislead, give illness, or capture people to work for them. Only the most powerful curers and witches, and the very greedy approach these spirits for they are reputed to be very "live" and maliciously clever. Snakes are the offspring of the hill and do the bidding of the hill owners.

Wealth in the form of livestock, corn, or gold can be gained from some of the cave owners upon request, but there is danger in receiving these gifts since they must be reciprocated. Among the cave owners who give gifts is Don Klabil, a deceased moneylender of the neighboring town. After his death in the 1940s, his spirit went to live in the hill bordering the two towns. People say that when he was alive he used to get money from the true owner of the cave. Those who have been inside the cave say it is filled with animals—cattle, horses, rabbits—which drink at a large interior lake. The appropriate approach for requesting wealth is to go on Thursday, "when the earth is open," and burn candles and incense. When the request is granted, the recipient must light candles at the cave every Thursday, and after his death he must work forever for the cave owner. It is said that at his death his wealth dies with him—usually all has been spent, and in fact children are left poor. Some say the spirit of the firstborn child of the recipient must be given to the owner to work for him. For this reason, there is no envy felt by neighbors when they see the increasing wealth of a man who has visited the caves and received such gains and he is doubly protected because no one can hurt an "enchanted man" (one who has entered the cave) with witchcraft.

Ladinos' belief in the cave owners gives support to the Indians' credence in their power. Ladinos inquire of Indians where they can find treasures. Once the request to the hill owners is made, it is essential to follow through correctly. Everyone in town knows the story of Martin Bautista, a curer who went to speak to the true owner of the hill in which Don Klabil lives.

He knew how to talk to the owner. The owner told him that at midnight on the following day, he would give him what he wanted. At midnight Maria, his wife, was alone in the house. She heard a noise and the sound of "Andale, burro!" *Then there was a knock at the door. When the*

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woman opened the door, she said, "Ay, Dios!" *The owner of the cave did not like this, and at that moment, he disappeared. Her husband returned the next morning. He beat her when he heard of the arrival of the hill owner and his disappearance when she invoked the name of the Lord. From that day on, he lost his luck and remained a poor man.*

The personalities of the cave owners are more fully defined than those of the spirits which reside in the forests. These tree spirits are able to talk to people, or they may sing, "as a mother sings to her child." They sometimes play tricks, misdirecting those who are lost in the woods. A man who intends to kill his enemy may go to talk to the tree spirits to gain their advice. Some plant spirits, such as tobacco, are stronger than others. Indians sometimes address the tobacco plant as "our grandfather" when they approach it, asking leave to pass. Some say that if you chew the tobacco plant you will have strength to overcome evil spirits when you walk in the woods.

An especially fearful group of spirits called *bohwaletik* roam the wooded hills in the late afternoons. These spirits, who look like Ladinos, are feared because they cut off people's heads to feed to the church bell in a neighboring town or to give to the spirits of major construction projects, such as dams. Suspicions are immediately aroused when a solitary Ladino is seen on the outskirts of the town near evening, and if several Indians sight him, they may even kill him.

Persistence of belief and rituals related to the old gods and demons that were part of the Maya pantheon is directly related to the fact that the Indians continue to live in the same place surrounded by the hills and caves that were the habitations of both good and bad spirits. The landscape serves as a mnemonic device, keeping alive the myths of the past. Everyone accepts the knowledge that the spirits once lived here; the only doubt is whether they continue to inhabit their appropriate places, particularly in the case of the ancestors who were responsible for crops and security. This is not a crisis of loss in belief, but a phasing into history of the mythological past. Since there is no longer acceptance of the curers' claim to communication with the spirits, the Indians believe they may have gone elsewhere. It is characteristic of these Indians that they do not

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241 825 *they said to me, "while we go over with the other two." I fell asleep. Then the raccoon entered. And so I believe the raccoon is very bright.*

Also there is the wild pig, who is less bright than the raccoon.

Another "thief" of the milpa is a small black insect which eats beans. These are eliminated in the following way:

[291] *When we plant beans, the women go with us wearing a new skirt and a new shawl. They walk near the plants, waving the shawl. The animals die. It has to be a new skirt. My mother proved it. She went with an old skirt, and she saw that they did not die. They just fled to the mountain out of shame. It is the smell of the old skirt that scared them away.*

241 825 782 788 If many animals are eating the crops, Indians buy three twenty-cent candles. They take them to the fields and light them, praying in Tzeltal: "God, holy world, please look at me and speak to the little animals. God, holy rock, holy forest, please look at me, hear me, speak to the animals."

The candles are media through which communication is made with the gods as well as gifts which seal the contract with the gods ensuring their protection and guardianship over the crops.

241 776 784 Guarding the crops also involves avoidance of certain kinds of behavior by the farmer and his wife. Farmers must always avoid irritating the spirits of the heaven who control the elements which make the growth of the crop possible. One informant explained:

One should not have sexual relations with anyone in the milpa because the Father Sun [Tatik K'ak'al] *gets angry or "ends his heart." He will not give crops. He gets very hot. One time, many women in town were looking for lovers. They would have sexual relations with boys in the daytime. The Father Sun got angry and caused the crops to burn. There was very little corn. The price went up to twenty cents a liter. People bought bread and mixed it with the nixtamal.*

It is different if a man is married to a woman in the church. The Tatik K'ak'al does not get angry. The Tatik K'ak'al does not have a woman of his own, and so he gets jealous if he sees people having sexual relations in the milpa in the daytime.

But if you have relations at night with a man in the milpa, Our grand-

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mother the Moon gets angry. This might cause an eclipse of the moon, and the crops will suffer because there will be no sun.

There is no prohibition, however, against having sexual relations prior to planting or at other crucial stages, as there are for other Maya Indians (Wagley 1941:34).

During the growing season, candles are lit in the milpa as protection against wind as well as robbers, who "lose their luck" when this is done.

The spirits' care of the crops. The crops have souls, given by the spirits, which will be lost if they are not cared for. The spirits "watch over the crops as parents watch over their children." The term for seed (*yal*) is a metaphorical extension of the term for "child of a woman."

The following myths give different, occasionally contradictory versions of the origin of crops. This central truth emerges in all of them: The spirits have given us our crops and will continue to do so as long as we offer thanks in the form of ceremonies and gifts to them.

Santo Tomás [the patron saint of Oxchuk] had intercourse with Santa Lucía. She wanted [asked for] *the soul of corn, and he gave her the seed of corn. Then there came forth beans, corn, and wheat. But then all the saints of San Bartolo and San Miguel [neighboring towns] asked for the soul of corn. Then the soul of beans left us and went to hot country. Now it does not grow well in the pueblo. Also, the avocado has gone to Comitán. The matasano and ground beans went to Oxchuk when Santa Lucía fought with Santo Tomás.*

The myth of the origin of crops overlays an older myth which has parallels in other groups of Maya-speaking Indians (Castro 1965, Wagley 1941:20).

Formerly, during a famine, there was hunger. The tzisim, *an insect of Ariola, came to take the corn from underground. Thus the ancestors got their first seed. For this reason, people say that corn was born underground, brought up by the tzisim. But I believe God sent us corn.*

Another version has synthesized the role of the saints and that of the animal agent.

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241 776 825 539 *The ant* [alielo] *brings corn out of the house. They say that a saint passed on horseback. The ant came to the saint, bringing a grain of corn. He stood before the saint, and the saint said, "Where are you going with the corn?" The ant replied, "To the storeroom." The saint inquired, "Which one?" The ant went to show the saint a stone as large as a church into which he entered to take out corn. There was white, yellow, and red corn.*

The saint returned to heaven and spoke to San Bartolo. San Bartolo asked, "Where is it?" The saint replied, "I will show you."

San Bartolo went with Santo Tomás to see the stone. Santo Tomás said, "Good, let us figure out how to destroy this stone." San Bartolo said, "Let us go talk to a carpenter." At this moment, a carpenter came. They asked him to cut the stone. "Good," said the carpenter, "I will do it."

But the carpenter could not open the stone. They went to another carpenter—there were three in this mountain. The first couldn't, nor could the second. The third carpenter said, "Let us talk to the tunselek *[woodpecker]. He is a good carpenter."*

The first two birds had broken their beaks, and the saints warned the woodpecker that he should be careful or he would fail with the stone. The woodpecker broke open the stone, and all the corn seed—yellow, red, and white—fell out. People should not kill these birds because they broke open the rock where the seeds were kept.

241 776 The necessity for showing respect to crops because of their relationship to the saints is expressed in the following account:

[539] *Corn must be treated with respect, since it is the body of the Virgin. You cannot step on anything which is for eating—beans, corn, or wheat —or the Virgin will become angry. Particular care has to be taken at the harvest to avoid offending the saints.*

Some of the saints serve man by helping to spread the cultivation of crops, as in the case of San Isidro, the patron saint of milpas.

[539] *The Padre told us that San Isidro helps the farmers. Formerly there was only milpa here where there is irrigated land. San Isidro went up to the*

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hilltop with a digging stick. He knelt and prayed, asking for rain. At that very moment, the rain came. He put the seeds in the holes he made, and from then on people have been planting in the hills.

Other saints are charged with providing rainfall. The saint of greatest importance in this respect is Santo Tomás, the patron saint of Oxchuk. Some Indians have gone to the church there to light a candle and ask for rain, and on their return the rains came. During an extended drought in August 1967, over one hundred people walked to Oxchuk to pray for rain. The people of Tzo?ontahal are somewhat bitter about the Oxchuqueños' neglect of Santo Tomás since over half of the town has converted to Protestantism. Whenever there is a drought, they blame it on the failure of the people of Oxchuk to take care of Santo Tomás.

In addition to the Catholic saints, the ancestor spirits help man to watch over the land. They are responsible for giving the rains in the planting period and early growing season. The fiesta on the Day of the Cross (Chapter 1) is primarily a plea for rain. Until the 1950s, the curers would hold a celebration at the Cave of the Ancestors to ask for rain during a drought. The waning belief in the presence of the ancestor spirits in the town has meant that there is less attention given to such fiestas. Some go to seek the ancestors in Chiapa de Corzo in the cave in which they are supposed to reside, as the following story illustrates:

One time my three brothers-in-law went to Chiapas to ask the ancestors for better crops. When they arrived there, nobody knew where the cave was. They said only a certain mayordomo there could find it.

Another time, two of the prayer-reciters went to the cave. They talked to the guard of the cave, saying, "May we speak to our ancestors?" The guard said, "Are you prepared? Did you bring two liters of trago? The ancestors like to drink."

The prayer-reciters went to get two liters of trago and all three drank it. While they were drinking, they saw a cow and chickens appear. The guardian said that if they came back in May with "food" for the ancestors —candles, incense, and firecrackers—they would get rich crops. I think the prayer-reciters succeeded because now they have a cow and chickens and a horse. They are afraid of the envy of their neighbors.

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628 People with lands in hot country recount that during droughts the In-
796 dians from the neighboring town of Chamula have held rainmaking fies-
782 tas for which they solicit contributions from other Indians.

821
731 *The Chamulteco came to us and said, "Let all of us who have milpas contribute five pesos for a fiesta." He brought the candles. In the little hill there the people brought drums and flute. We ate chickens and drank liquor. For eleven hours he prayed, and in the afternoon it rained.*

628 The *kuriketik*, rural inhabitants of the colonia of San Vicente who
241 migrated to Amatenango from Chanal, have no irrigated lands and de-
789 pend directly on rainfall throughout the growing season. Indians of the center know of their practice of sticking their digging sticks into the ground with the points toward the sky "to puncture the clouds" when they have planted their milpa, but they do not imitate this practice. Control over the supply of water in the irrigated lands has apparently led to the neglect of supernatural appeals even where the canals do not supply water. Under pressure of extended drought, they will resort to spiritual intercession through Chamula or Oxchuk practitioners in whom they have some faith.

241 Acquiring the protection of the gods does not obviate the practical activ-
796 ities necessary in the cultivation of crops. Fiestas for the saints are a repay-
782 ment for services rendered in watching over the milpa. The sponsorship of
796 fiestas for the saints by the community ensures the protection for all of the crops, and general crop failure due to drought or high winds is explained as a result of mismanagement of these community-wide fiestas. The offering of candles to the spiritual owner of one's own milpa is a kind of individual insurance policy for future crops as well as a repayment for the gift of the corn harvest. The peasant notion of surplus value is implicit in this reciprocal relation: the payment, or gift, of two candles to the milpa spirit is far less than the value of the harvest. But the account is balanced by the expenditure of this surplus in communal fiestas.

Pottery Production

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178 Making pottery has been a speciality of the town since pre-Conquest
172 days. The old site of the town contains sherds of pottery which is remarkably similar in texture, design, and form to the pottery made now.

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of what seeds grow best in which soils. Good, fast-growing seed is not sowed indiscriminately but is limited to use on more fertile irrigated lands. The size of a family's holdings is the primary factor in deciding what proportion of the three major crops—corn, beans, and wheat—they will grow. Where they grow each of these crops depends upon the quality of the soil categorized by topological criteria, consistency, color, and proved fertility. Decline in productivity is attributed to wearing out of soil fertility because of overuse as well as to loss of the soul of crops. The first explanation leads to adaptive behavior, in which the land is "rested" or turned over to cattle grazing, and to crop rotation, alternating wheat and corn crops. The second explanation leads to adjustive behavior in which the agriculturalist takes care of ceremonial obligations to the saints and to the "owner of the milpa."

The scheduling of activities is determined by the knowledge of time required for maturing of the crop and by expectations concerning seasonal fluctuations as they affect rainfall. Although the farmers have some control over water supply through irrigation, dependence on rainfall for the non-irrigated fields means that sporadic appeals to the ancestors or saints are made to ensure rain in the growing period. These rituals are not as integrated in the agricultural production cycle as they are in the neighboring towns of Chamula and Oxchuk or in the colonia of San Vicente where irrigation facilities are lacking.

Traditional techniques of pottery production are maintained by a tightly organized schema of procedures which allows for little variation in technique or form. Learning of productive techniques is facilitated by a fine segmentation of tasks. Knowledge of local clays and tempering has been stabilized for at least five hundred years of occupation in this area. Women's work is entirely lacking in rituals to ensure the success of their efforts.

These given sets of cognitive orientations in economic activities do not exclude the possibility of considering new ways or means of doing things. Agriculturalists have tried the new seed introduced by agronomists, but have found them wanting in their resistance to mold, in the case of corn, and in their portability, in the case of wheat. Fertilizers have been tried, but the credit costs proved too high for the agriculturalists to continue. Women were willing to try a kiln in place of open firing, but either the model introduced was faulty or they were not taught to use it properly.

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model introduced was faulty or they were not taught to use it properly. Notions about the supernatural relation between souls of crops, man, and the saints do not interfere with experimentation or adaptation at the instrumental level. Obligations with respect to them are carried on as a supplement to other practical measures.

The organization of men's work in agriculture contrasts with that of women's work in pottery. Men's work, when performed cooperatively by two or more of an extended household or exchange labor team, is mechanically organized, in Durkheim's terminology. Each of the men does the same task, working closely in the rows of the milpa. Women's work groups are organically organized since segmentation of the pottery production in the stages described above makes possible specialization within a domestic production group including two or more women. Preferences and special abilities can be taken into account. The potters with more experience do the jobs which require more judgement and skill, such as mixing the clay or making the bases, and then the work is passed on to less proficient workers. Or an older woman can leave the more strenuous tasks, such as mixing clay or building up the sides of the larger pots, to younger women and perform the lighter tasks, such as putting on the neck and handles.

These differences in the organization of male and female work tasks suggest the need for a reformulation of the classification of whole societies as organically or mechanically integrated. In assessing the potential for change, internal variations in the organization of production might provide the clues for implementing development programs.

The division of labor according to sex is nearly absolute: women do not learn to work in the milpa nor do men learn to make pottery or perform household tasks. However, women will gather firewood, and men will transport clay (although they do not collect the clay deposits in balls) and help in firing pottery. Women can live without men in the household economy of the town, but men cannot live without women. This is because male labor is a market commodity while female labor in household activities is not. A widow can hire a man to work her fields, but a man cannot hire a cook. If he is widowed, he must remarry, move into his

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suitable, the president and judges give permission to the curers to allow him to enter the profession at this time. The novice provides three liters of liquor which are drunk "in common" by the curers and the civil officials.

There is some evidence that, formerly, novice curers were asked to yield the soul of one of their children:

My dead husband was given permission by Julian Gomez, the leader of the curers of Ahk'olnantik, to enter the curing profession. When my husband told me he wanted to cure, he said that Julian had asked him for a child "for the ancestors to eat." My husband was going to give a child of his brother since we didn't have any, but I said it would be a pity. Then he said he would give trago. This he did. I forget how many liters.

When the contagion came, the curers went to take out the heat. A policeman called my dead husband, and he went. The policeman said the leading curer had called him. The judges told him, "It is better for you to enter in common with the other curers."

He began to cure. The curers then asked what offering we were going to give.

"We have no children," said my husband. "We will give you liquor. I cannot give my brother's child or my sister's children."

He must have brought them about ten or twelve liters of trago and two packs of cigarettes.

The third soul, swayohel, may be acquired, or one may be born with it. Those who acquire the third soul by capture of the soul of a dead person within twenty days after the death are considered to be potentially dangerous. They are more likely to use the soul for evil than those who have acquired it from the ancestors at birth. Swayoheles can be acquired from a saint named ʔAhau in the neighboring town of Oxchuk.[1] The following account illustrates how one asks this saint for a swayohel:

If you go to the saint with a black face named ʔAhau with two candles of twenty cents you can ask for a swayohel. You say, "I want one ʔulel that is very strong. I have an enemy. I need one." You sleep there, and wake

1. Lombardo Otero (1944:73) says that in Oxchuk, Mukulajau, or Chulajau, is identified with Trinidad, and is associated with the pigeon, which is the animal spirit of powerful curers.

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up with a swayohel. One man near San Vicente said his friend went there to ask for one. Next day, the enemy died. One man who went there said when he woke up he was sure he had gained a swayohel. He had dreamed of two animals. "Are they my swayoheles?" he asked. They were jaguars.

When he got to his house, the same two animals came. They thought about how to get his enemies. But when the jaguars had killed his enemies, they were not content. Then they went on to kill many people. Finally the man was shot. The spirits of all those who die as a result of a swayohel received from ?Ahau go to him after their death.

Curers are classified as potentially good or dangerous on the basis of what kind of swayohel they have. Good curers have swayoheles of animals which eat leaves or grass—horses, sheep, bulls, or other herbivorous animals. Potentially dangerous curers have the souls of carnivorous animals —vultures, dogs, cats, mountain lions, coyote, and others. They may not use these swayoheles for evil, but possession of such a soul is a basis for suspicion. Usually the curers keep secret the nature of their swayohel, but sometimes when they are drunk they brag about its power. Good swayoheles fly or walk straight down the main roads of the town, while evil swayoheles lurk at the outskirts of the settled area.

Only one woman has a swayohel and practices curing. She is reputed to have acquired her swayohel in the following manner:

There was a woman named Andrea Ča?il and another named Fernanda Ča?il. They were not sisters, but they were of the Ča?iletik. Fernanda died. She was a true elder woman, a very strong woman. She lived in Madronal and Andrea lived in the center.

One day Andrea said, "Let us go collect wood," to two girls.

"Let's go," said the girls. "Where shall we get the wood?"

"Let's go in the woods behind Madronal," replied Andrea. "Let's go."

The women arrived in the mountain to cut wood. When they had the wood, Andrea said she saw a mulberry bush. "Let us eat some berries," she said.

Andrea went to the mulberry bush. She saw a white ball of Čišol under the bush. "What kind of an animal is that?" she asked.

The girls looked at it and said, "We don't know."

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"He looked for trouble!" Domingo replied.
I said, "You killed my husband!"
He said, "It was not I! It was not I!"
It doesn't serve to enter curing early. People will kill you right away. Another young man wanted to enter. The curers did not permit him since they said he was a witch. People heard he was a witch, and they killed him. He was the same age as my husband [*about twenty-seven*].

The curers who have survived to an old age were introduced into the profession by an elder relative. They choose their clients carefully, refusing to cure a man who is on the point of death, and remaining within their own section of the dual division. These rules of survival are ignored by some of the younger men who wish to impress their elders with their powers.

The changing image of the curers. The curers of today are unfavorably compared with those of the past who used their power for good. The prototype of the old curer was the fearful Tatik Ča'uk, Lord of the Lightning, possibly a local manifestation of the Maya god Chac.[2] The dialectic of power is exemplified in his control over beneficial and destructive forces. His beneficence is demonstrated in his ability to bring rain to crops, while his vengeance is revealed in lightning bolts which can kill people and destroy houses. Anyone who is struck by lightning is believed to have had some sin for which the Tatik Ča'uk has punished him. His destructive force is equated with a rifle—called "the elder brother of the Lord of Lightning"—and with the "heat" which brings death in illnesses. His habitation is believed to be the Cave of the Star where the heat which causes epidemics is found.

The curers were intermediaries for the Tatik Ča'uk in their control over both destructive and beneficial forces. Formerly, the swayohel of the curers patrolled the streets of the town to prevent the entry of evildoers bringing heat. It is in this role that they are referred to as me'iltatil. If an epidemic occurred, the two leading curers from each side of the town con-

2. In other Tzeltal- and Tzotzil-speaking communities, the god Ča'uk is named as the chief figure from pre-Conquest theology (Hermitte 1964, Holland 1963:93).

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medicine. But why should they ask for medicine if the curers were going to eat their souls as he told me? I asked him, "How do you eat their souls?" He said that the five or six curers would make a common meal. They looked for a frying pan, and when it was well cooked, they would call all the curers and say, "Come, let us eat in common." When people came to ask for medicine, they would say, "Please, give us medicine." The curers would give the medicine, but the sick ones did not get well. The curers were only deceiving them. How could they get well if they wanted to eat their souls? They only wasted their money.

It is this that O. K. said to me. He told me himself that he had eaten the souls. Then I felt that he was bad because of what he himself had told me. To this day, I believe that he himself did the evil to his patients.

The personality of the curer. In view of the hazards of entering the curing profession and the low material rewards, the question of what motivates a curer to practice is of some interest. The older curers claim that God spoke to them in a dream and made known His desire that they cure. They conceive of it as a responsibility to the people, and maintain that their power comes from God. This contradicts parallel statements made by the same curers that their power comes from their swayohel. The younger curers say that the curers of their side selected them because they saw that they had a swayohel.

Direct questioning yields only limited understanding of what motivates these extraordinary people. The behavior of some of the curers reveals facets of the role which could not be elicited from them in questioning. Curers are able to defy tenets of the moral code of the community which stress softness and slowness, a moderation which is fundamentally based on fear of the world of spirits and of men. When drunk, the curers brag about their strength and fearlessness. They try to avoid the usual negative sanctions to such behavior by asserting the strength of their swayoheles and their imperviousness to harm.

My elder brother Albino was drinking with the dead Nicolás, leader of the curers of Alannantik. When both were half drunk, my elder brother asked Nicholás what swayohel he had.

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symptomatic of the present breakdown in the hierarchical controls which formerly maintained the authority of elder curers. Informants say that in the old days there was no such competition, and the leadership of the elder curers was unchallenged.

Another clue to the personality of the curer can be seen in the statement of a young curer, who expressed in a kind of stream-of-consciousness style the fears and worries that plague him. After responding to the questioning about what he did when he cured, he proceeded to talk of his own concerns as he cured patients:

And when I arrive at Pahaltón [curing spring], I set aside my hat and blanket so that they do not get burned. If a dog should come and chew my sandals or if I should leave them outside the house where I am curing and a house rat chews them, then it will cost me thirty pesos to buy a new pair. When I come out late at night, a cat spirit sometimes appears on the road, and I throw a stone at it so it will not carry off my spirit; or a dog comes and I must beat him with my hand because I have no machete with me, or I must throw a broken bottle at the devil. When I get home, I take off my jacket and hat and go to sleep. My woman must tie up the sandals with a string on the rafters so that the rat will not eat them. Then it is the woman's fault if the devil dog gets them.

Late at night the spirits of the curers come to play and go at cock's crow. And at two o'clock the spirit of a sheep comes out with the devil, and these spirits do not go to sleep in their house until dawn. And if they [the curers' spirits] arrive in bed drunk and take off their huaraches and bother their wife she will put them in prison and then they have to pay a fine of two liters of the "gift" [liquor] and one handful of cigarettes. If their woman leaves the curers and they come out of prison, then if they do the same thing again, they send then to Santo Domingo. In prison they make net bags and if they have a wife, she goes and gives them tortillas and coffee. If their wife or father and mother help and give money, then they can pay for a lawyer and get out. Or if they have a daughter, then they receive the gift of a suitor and eat the bread.[3] *Later there will come the chicken and sweet liquor and trago, and then she will marry. Later*

3. "Eating the bread" signifies that the betrothal negotiations are accepted.

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from the spring and a live black chicken which draws the heat from the patient, taking it into its own body. The branches are dipped in a mixture of raw cocoa, pieces of melon mixed in water, and other "cold" items. A new set of clothing, smoked over an incense burner in which pitch pine is burned, is put on the patient. A common meal of chicken or beef stew is served with tortillas to all the guests.

In the case of more persistent illnesses, the bathing may take place at the springs. Male patient go to the large spring of San Nicolás and female patients to Pahaltón. A curing arch is erected near the spring. The curer calls upon the spirit of the spring to perform a miracle. Some members of the family stay behind at the house so that if the spirit of the patient should return before he does, it will be welcomed. The people waiting in the house, called maliwanehetik, must drink as much liquor as do those at the spring.

Sometimes the soul of a child is called at the place where fear caused it to be lost. The cure is started at the house, and then part of the group goes to the place which the curer has designated as the location of the fright. Soil is gathered in a kerchief or item of the patient's clothing and is placed at the head of his bed. As the group returns to the house, one of the child's relatives plays the guitar at the gate, and the curer sweeps a path for the soul with branches he has taken from the spring. Inside the house, the soul is again called while the curer brushes the child with spring branches. The mother embraces the child as incense is smoked over him and all his clothing. The child is then pulsed to determine whether the soul has returned.

Medicating the house. The strategy of medicating the house is tied to an understanding of the interaction of the spirit of the house and those of the inmates. When the evil sent out by the witch enters the house, it first asks permission of the house posts to enter the soil of the house. The house is adorned with pine branches and flowers to make the house-soul happy. Old men make palm crosses for the center post and corner posts of the yard. One large 50-cent candle is lit at the center post with small 20-cent candles on each side. When these candles are lighted they "blind the eye of evil spirits who can see only in the dark." A black chicken is buried alive in the square hole where the offering of the sheep

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755 776 348 has been made at the time of the house inauguration. Food for the chicken—bread, chocolate, tortilla, and liquor—is put in the hole so it will stay alive for eight days.

The logic of the meal is that the house needs nourishment and for this reason has been fighting with the inmates and causing their illness. After the guests have been fed, the curer marks a cross with a mixture of garlic, creosote, seeds of mustard, and a "hot" herb called poščan, on the center post inside the house and on the corner posts. Like the candles, the cross serves to "blind the eye" of the evil spirits so that they will not reenter the house and talk the spirit of the house into causing harm.

This ceremony replicates that of the house meal at the time of the inauguration (Chapter 1). The music of the guitar and gourd rattle is intended to make both the soul of the house and the souls of the inmates content. Why the curing of the house is always done on Thursday, when "the holy earth is open," is not fully understood by the curers I have questioned; they say, "We have forgotten how to talk to the earth." Chamula curers are reputed to be able to talk to the earth, and consultations may be sought with them if the illness continues.

755 776 782 [539] *Prayer.* The curers talk with the soul of the thirteen ancestors of the world,[5] to the "spirits of the heaven and of the church," and to saints of neighboring towns, asking for a good cure. The following prayer is one given by the oldest and most honored of the curers:

Sacred earth, sacred world
Thirteen holy world, holy flowers
In the center of another holy world

Look mother, its clay
I am a child, its clay.
Holy heaven, Jesus Christ
Holy herbs give the spirit

[801] 5. The number 13 has significance in the Maya cosmology in the 13 levels of heaven (Thompson 1964:125). The 13 candles set before the curing arch symbolize the 13 holy worlds. The meal for the house spirit includes 13 cigarettes.

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The companions of the patient
are gathered here with his father
In the center of this other holy
earth
Holy earth, take out the fever.

The curer then calls upon each of the saints of the surrounding towns, asking for help in bringing about a miracle. First he calls upon the major saints of the pueblo (Santa Lucía, San Francisco, Santiago, San Pedro the Martyr, and the Virgen de Rosario), then those of Teopisca (San Augustín and the Virgen de Mercedes), of San Cristóbal (San Cristóbal and Justo Juez), of Villa Carranza (Señor del Pozo and San Bartolo), of Socoltenango (the Virgen de Candelaria), of Villa las Rosas (San Miguel and San José), of Comitán (Santo Domingo, San Caralampio, and the Virgen de Santa Teresa), and finally Señor Esquipulas of Tulanca. Thus he defines the meaningful spiritual universe of the village, building a kind of hegemony of defense and protection.

At any point throughout the cure the patient may consult the doctor sent by the I.N.I., the priest, or the schoolteacher, all of whom compete with each other in gaining clients by dispensing medicines. This does not undermine the role of the curer since curing the disease is considered a separate issue from stopping the witchcraft which is causing it. The disease may be cured, but the persistence of the witchcraft will eventually cause death through spiritual malaise unless treated by the curer.

All the people of the village know the common herbs and the sicknesses for which they should be used. The basis for the curer's power thus is not specialized knowledge of medicines, but the strength of his swayohel in fighting that of the enemy, and his esoteric knowledge of pulsing.

Formerly curers received minimal pay for practicing. The family of the patient offered about 20 pesos or worked in the fields of the curer. Curers refused larger payments because they said their skill came from God, and it would be a sin to accept money for it. This practice is continued today by one old curer for patients within the community. However, he receives from 100 to 200 pesos from out-of-town patients. A Ladina from the neigh-

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Chapter 8

Taking Care of the Lord Spirits

Religious behavior is concerned with two major goals: maintaining a given state of prosperity and protecting the community against disaster. In the words of one informant: "All of the goods which we enjoy—the corn, beans, and wheat that we eat, the animals which work for us and give us food—are the gifts of the Lord spirits." The technique for maintaining the flow of goods of the world is the annual cycle of fiestas for the saints. The strategy for protecting the community against disaster is through avoidance of offense and special offerings to the gods identified with pre-hispanic deities and spirits. Responsibility for the ceremonial cycle is assigned to officials who represent the community, but everyone is responsible for the avoidance of disaster, since any transgression of moral behavior by an individual can cause their wrath and bring destruction of crops and animals. The protective rituals involve beliefs continuous from pre-hispanic times; maintenance depends on Catholic saints.

Kinds of Lord Spirits

Religious behavior is based on an understanding of the personality and rank of each deity in a hierarchy of power. The people distinguish two major categories of gods: the lord spirits of the heaven, *č'ultatik ta č'ulčan,* and the lord spirits of the church, *č'ultatik ta č'ulna.* The prefix *č'ul* in all of these terms can be translated as spirit. All growing things—people, plants, and animals—have a spirit. *Tatik* can be translated as our lords, elders, or fathers. The categories of spirits discussed here differ from the *č'uleletik* (Chapter 1) since these are spirits possessed by the place in which they dwell, as indicated by the possessive form of the noun with the prefix *s-*.

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The two groups of spirits differ in their traditional characteristics and functions. The spirits of the heaven "look to see where everyone is going," "look and listen to all that people say," "are very alive," and "are of the world." In contrast to them, the spirits of the church "are not alive," "do not speak," "do not do anything," "are only of the pueblo." Thus the spirits of the heaven are universal; those of the church are particular. The saints' images which are kept in the church of the town are not considered to represent the same person as these same images in other towns. This conception of saints as local and distinct personalities is found in other Maya Indian towns and differs from that of orthodox Catholicism.

The lord spirits of the heaven. The spirits of the heaven are God the Father, *Tios Tatil,* God the Son, *Tios Niẽ'anil,* and the Holy Spirit, *Spiritusantú.* Table 27 indicates the identification made between these major figures and pre-hispanic spiritual entities.

TABLE 27. Pre- and Post-Hispanic Equivalents of the Lord Spirits of the Heavens

Post-Hispanic spirits		*Pre-Hispanic spirits*
Tios Tatil (God the Father)	=	B'alamilal (The World) B'ankilal (Elder Brother)
Tios Niẽ'anil (God the Son, Jesus Christ)	=	Sčeb'al B'ankilal (Second Brother)
Spiritusantú (Holy Spirit)	=	Tatik K'ahk'al (The Lord Sun) K'oš (referential, Last Child) Šut (vocative, proper name) ʔihtz'in (Younger Brother)
Meʔ Santú (Virgin Mary)	=	Meʔtikčič ʔu (Our Grandmother the Moon)

The "mystery" of the Trinity is "explained" in the following story in which pre-hispanic deities are identified with the Christian deities.

Many years ago, the Lord Sun [Tatik K'ak'al] *did not walk as now. He was only hanging in the heavens. Our Grandmother the Moon* [Meʔtik Čič ʔu] *bore three sons named God the Father* [Tios Tatil], the Elder *Brother; God the Son, Second Brother; and a third named K'oš, or Last One. The first brother did not turn out bright nor did the second brother. It was the youngest brother, K'oš, who was the brightest. When the Elder*

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Brother was in heaven, there never was night. He never rested from his work.

One day K'oš said to his brother, "Let us go for a walk. We will get honey and eat it. I know where there is a tree." He told his mother to make tortillas to take with them. She made many tortillas for K'oš to eat, and in addition made two small tortillas.

His mother asked K'oš, "Why do you want to go out walking?"

He replied, "I am going to find honey. Wait for me to return."

K'oš and his two older brothers walked until they arrived at the tree with the honey. The Elder Brother said, "I shall climb very high."

K'oš said, "I too will climb."

The Elder Brother said, "Do not climb. Wait and I shall throw the honey down. You cannot climb the tree, Šut" [for this is what they called K'oš].

K'oš just waited for his brother to throw down the honey. K'oš got very angry because the Elder Brother just threw down beeswax.[1] An animal entered the trunk of the tree and started eating the root. The tree shook, frightening the two brothers. They called out, "What are you doing, Šut?"

"Nothing. I am not doing anything. Why don't you give me good honey?"

"Go on and drink it," the older brothers said.

"I don't like it. It isn't any good," replied K'oš.

He did nothing for a while. Then the tree fell. K'oš saw the tree fall. He went and got the two small tortillas his mother had packed in his lunch, and he put one on the Elder Brother's nose. His brother turned into a pig. He tried to put the other tortilla on the Second Brother's nose, but he could not seize him. The Second Brother turned into a wild boar, and fled into the forest. He brought the Elder Brother to his house. When he arrived at his house with his little pig, he said to his mother, "Mother, I have brought a little pig to raise."

"Where did you find it?" his mother asked.

"I just brought it," replied K'oš.

1. In recounting this passage, the narrator laughed, and when I asked why, said that the word for beeswax is also the word for excrement. She commented that K'oš was very bright because he would not tolerate this.

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"Is there food for it?" asked his mother.

"I am going to plant a milpa to feed the little pig. You stay here and watch the little pig and I will go."

"Yes, I will care for it," said his mother.

K'oš went to plant his milpa. As he was leaving, he said to his mother, "I will return in the afternoon."

His mother said, "I shall await you in the afternoon."

When K'oš returned, his mother asked, "How is your milpa?"

He replied, "It isn't ready. Tomorrow I am going to burn it because it is just a forest."

The next day, K'oš returned to his milpa. Everything he had cut had grown back in his milpa. He asked himself, "How did it spring up? I am going to wait and see who is causing the trouble." He waited and saw a bird entering the milpa. The bird said, "I don't want to have the woods burned!"

K'oš said, "I am going to start the fire."

He started the fire, and then he said, "I am going to where the day meets the heaven." He picked up the fire of his milpa, saying, "My brother does not know how to walk. I am going to walk around and return."

Now the day walks in front and the night walks behind.[2]

The story has an aftermath which describes the continuing relationship between the Lord Sun, K'oš, and his mother, Our Grandmother the Moon.

The Lord Sun sees all of our sins and puts them in a book. If anyone has sexual relations in the milpa, he puts it down. When he sees this, he gets angry because he walks alone. He wants to end the world since he does not endure our sins. But Our Grandmother the Moon does not want

2. There are other versions of this story in neighboring Tzeltal-speaking communities. Castro (1959:24–31) gives an Oxchuk version in which the identification of the three brothers with the Christian Trinity is not made. Šut, the vocative term used in the Tzo^{9}-ontahal version, is given as the name of the youngest brother, who succeeded in giving a new sun to the world. But in outwitting his brothers with the honey, Šut killed them rather than turning them into pigs. A Chol version (Whittaker and Warkentin 1965) is closer to that of Oxchuk.

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the sun to kill people. She is afraid that if all the people die, other people will come who have just one hand and one foot. They will not be able to work. Our Grandmother the Moon wants things as they are. So she fights the Sun, and then there is an eclipse. For this reason, people say that she bears our sins.

The tales occasionally try to bring the old gods into focus with the Christian gods and to explain certain cosmological events, for example the eclipse and the movement in the heavens of the sun and the moon. The synthesis is incomplete. First of all, the small part Jesus (Second Brother) plays in the first myth, in which he finally disappears into the forest, shows a failure to fit the three gods into the pre-hispanic format which included only two main characters. Secondly, the myths fail to synthesize the codes of morality stemming from Maya and Christian sources. In Christian mythology, the deities are conceived of as perfect. They are not identified with the sun, but are the power of creation which brought forth the sun and made it move. Destructive forces come from the evil power of the Devil. The deities of the Indians incorporate both good and evil. Cosmological forces are the gods acting directly either to promote or destroy man's work. Even the Grandmother Moon, who shows compassion for her grandchildren, can be piqued into destroying their crops.

In another tale the personification of good and evil in separate characters shows greater influence from Catholicism. Jesus emerges as the hero who, with the collaboration of the Virgin Mary, outwits the Devil.

After Jesus was crucified, the King of the Jews[3] *called upon people to sow a staff to prove who moves the world. Jesus planted the seed, but the Jews did not let them grow. He did it again, and only one leg came out and one hand came out. Therefore the plant did not stand because the "King of Evil" was watching.*

Jesus and his mother had an idea. He spoke to her, saying, "What do you think, Mother?" She replied, "The only thing I can say is, what can we think of?"

The Lord Christ replied, "Our children and offspring [the milpa] do

3. The Devil is alternately called King of the Jews [Statal Jurio], King of Evil [Statal Pukuh], and the Devil in the story.

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not stand. Only one stands—he who does not respect us." The Virgin Mother said, "Yes, I saw another one who walks well watching our children." Jesus asked, "Did you get a good look where he walks?" His mother replied, "Yes, indeed, I saw him." Christ asked, "If you know, what are we going to do there where he walks?" "I do not know what we shall do," said his mother.

Then, after a pause, Christ said, "Now I know what we will do! Do you know what hour he passes?" The Virgin answered, "Yes, I do."

"Good. I am going to make a little house and put a Victrola, an accordion, and also a violin in it. I will put a marimba, a guitar, and a harp on each side of the road. And I shall also put trago and beer, everything that is good to drink. When you see him coming, we will begin to play the marimba and guitar and all the music on both sides of the road. When you see the King of Evil, we will begin the dance and drink trago—everything there is—and he will look at what we drink."

The Virgin said, "I will invite him to dance a little." "Yes, you remain here dancing, and I shall go for a moment to see his children [corn plants]. Continue dancing while I go out to look," said Christ. The Virgin answered, "Good. Good."

And so the Devil passed by. When Christ left, the Virgin began to dance with the Devil. They drank more liquor to make him "lose his heart" [get drunk]. The Virgin did not see that the Devil put his tail in half of the bottle. It is because of this that the people say liquor is one-half Devil and one-half God.

Meanwhile, Jesus arrived where the children of the Devil were. He made no more than the sign of the cross, and all the children of the Devil died. It is after the Children of the Devil died that Christ seized control of the world.

And so it is true that we are his children who came out of Jesus Christ.

In this tale, evil is personified in the enemy of the Catholic Church, the King of the Jews who is also the pre-hispanic "King of Evil." The Virgin Mother is concerned with preventing the world from reverting to the situation in which people were born helpless, with just one arm and one leg, as it was when the Devil was in control. To prevent this, when the moon is "sick" or in eclipse, the people must call her back to life. The strategy is

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to make a great deal of noise by striking hoes, firing rifles, blowing the horns of bulls, and striking gourds. The logic of this behavior can be understood from the following statement of an informant: "The sickness of the moon is a result of the conflict of the sun with the moon. The noise we made frightens the father sun so that he will stop fighting the moon. If he were to win, the people would die, and new people would be born with only one leg and one arm."[4]

We have in this story what appears to be an overlay of post-hispanic mythology, in which the Devil personifies evil forces, superimposed on a prehispanic mythological identification of the powers of both good and evil in single cosmological deities. Whereas in the previous myth it is the Devil, the King of the Jews, who caused all of the children of Jesus to die and to be reborn with only one arm and one leg, in this statement it is the sun who can effect the same reversal of nature. The sun, Tatik K'alik, has the power to cause the milpa to grow, but by staying out too long, it can burn the crop. Similarly lightning, Tatik Ča'uk, may bring rain, but can destroy the milpa with the winds that precede the rain or kill man and destroy his house. Man is responsible for determining how the force of the gods will be directed.

The guardianship of the sun and the moon over the people of the world serves to control or at least restrain the behavior of people. Since both of them "walk alone," without companionship, they become jealous if they see sexual relations performed by people in the milpa. Since all legal sexual relations are carried out in the relative privacy of the house, it is only those who seek illicit relationships who retreat to the milpa, and so this restraint has a prohibitive effect on unsanctioned sexual behavior. If the moon sees someone in the milpa at night, she refuses to retire and stays out, not letting her son the sun rise. Similarly, when the sun sees someone in the milpa in the daytime, he refuses to retire, burning the milpa with his hot rays.

The lord spirits of the east. There is another category of spirits which is ill defined and not many people know. These are the spirits of

4. The same behavior, that of making noise during an eclipse, is found in the Maya Indian community of Cantel, Guatemala, but there it is interpreted as a means of calling the sick grandmother back to life by showing that her grandchildren care about her.

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776 the east. Each of these is responsible for giving something to men: one gave corn, one wheat, one bulls, one horses, and one pigs. These spirits are recognized in the context of the household only: at the end of each household ceremony, the assembled guests stand and look to the East where the gods reside in a place called Santo Arió, somewhere in Guatemala. Since their gifts to mankind are products which are produced and consumed by the household, and since they are recognized in the context of the house, there is some basis for thinking of them as old household gods. Calnek (1962:61) has pointed out that among the ancient Maya, household gods were part of "a hierarchically ordered series of deities, worship or propitiation of which progressively links him not with other individuals conceived particularistically, but to all larger social units of which he is a member."

776 539 177 The only case I know in which an identification is made between these household gods and the saints concerns Santa Teresa:

Once long ago the owners began to harvest their milpas, and they put the corn in a pile. When the harvest was finished, they began to beat the corn from the cob. When they carried off the corn, some of the seed [sb'ak'] *remained.*

A man passed by and heard a saint talking. He asked what she said, and she replied, "Nothing. I said that you should tell the Padre to pick me up and put my body (also sb'ak') in a church. I want a church for myself, and I shall wait here until you come to carry me inside the church. I do not want any companion. I don't want you to throw away the corn seeds, nor do I want you to burn the seeds because they are my bones. Make a good fiesta and bring me into the church with firecrackers and with prayers. Raise me high on a pedestal because I do not want to be kissed, I only want my feet to be kissed."

And now there is a church for Santa Teresa standing in a milpa outside of Comitán, in which she lives alone since there is no companion for her.

776 177 *The lord spirits of the church.* Among the sixteen saints of the church, four "big saints"—Sacramento, San Pedro the Martyr, Santa Lucía, and San Francisco—are distinguished from the others. All four are considered by the Indians to be patron saints of the pueblo, although the

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priest lists only one, San Francisco. Only these top four are hierarchically ordered. The big saints are supposed to be able to make miracles, but there are stories only for San Pedro and Santa Lucía. San Pedro Martyr, *Tatik Martil,* is the only saint possessing a soul. The image of San Pedro shows him with a hatchet in his head, blood dripping over his face. According to legend, San Pedro was the first patron saint of the town. The following story recounts his transformation:

Tatik Martil was of a very foreign kind of heart. He gave permission to the witches to bring sickness. Only those who knew how to make illness spoke with him. They went and asked permission to make the illness continue. People heard he was very evil, and they threw him out of church. They cut off his head, saying, "You only give evil. You do not give any miracles. You have given the old ones permission to give evil."

San Pedro received a new head in Pinola. Now he is good and is of one heart with the Virgin Santa Lucía, with Sacramento, and with San Francisco.

The logic by which San Pedro is cast as leader of the witches is implicit in judgments concerning guilt in cases of homicide. Any man who is killed is referred to as the guilty person, since protecting the village from witchcraft is the main motivation for homicide. When an early priest set up an image of San Pedro in the church, this must have inspired fear and foreboding. He was transmogrified by the people into the leader of the witches, and they burned the church to the ground. (Its foundations are still visible in Alannantik.) Whether the priest at that time (around 1746) convinced the people that, with a new head purchased in Pinola, San Pedro was transformed, or whether the people invented the story, we do not know. Despite his reformation, San Pedro still inspires fear. He is identified with the Lord of Lightning, Tatik Ča'uk. The following is a typical account of his power:

This power comes from his possession of an animal spirit. Whenever the lightning strikes, people know that some sin has been committed. The old people say that he asked a son-in-law to put down a lightning flash. The son-in-law couldn't do it—I don't know why he couldn't do his work—

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776 821 539 177 *and so he returned and the Lord of Lightning gave him another job—that of making lightning flashes.*

776 177 789 San Pedro now gives protection to the people from the power he wields. During his fiesta, palm crosses are distributed to everyone who attends mass; if a man walks with a cross tucked in his hat or a woman wears one strung on her neck, he or she will not be struck by lightning. The houses are similarly protected with palm crosses.

776 177 Santa Lucía is the only other saint in the local roster who is described as being "very powerful." She is supposed to be able to cure diseases of the eyes. The image of her in the church shows her holding two eyes reflected in a small mirror in the palm of her hand. The story which explains why she holds them was told me with an expression of complete belief, and other informants vouch for its authenticity:

776 177 539 821 *Formerly, Santa Lucía used to "talk with" [a euphemism for "had an affair with"] Santo Tomás of Oxchuk. Santo Tomás loved her because she was pretty. Santa Lucía was so in love with Santo Tomás that she gave him a gift of her eyes. He did not want them—he was frightened by the gift—and he returned them. From then on, she did not speak to him. Now, when a child has sickness of his eyes, his mother buys medicine and takes it to Santa Lucía who gives her blessing, and the child gets well.*

They say the lightning struck the church in Oxchuk, and it was the fault of Santa Lucía. But then a few years ago it struck our church. And that was the fault of Santo Tomás. He is very strong.

"I am going to see how she will pay for that!" said Santo Tomás.

And in ten years a storm came and broke the tower of our church. There was a meeting of the principales. They said, "Let's sell the cattle of Santa Lucía so that we can build a new church." The tower was struck another time. All the married men had to contribute forty pesos each. We made it out of metal this time, because Santo Tomás is very strong.

821 776 On a conscious level, most people know that the earth is round, and that the sun revolves around it, but the motivating power behind natural phenomena is still conceived in personalized terms. One informant, when asked why the sun rises and sets, ventured cautiously, "I have heard that our Father, the Sun, revolves and that he goes down below the earth. But

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I do not know if it is so. I just heard that in a story told." He then referred back to the story of K'oł, the younger brother who took over the task of carrying the sun from his elder brother, to explain how the sun's movement started.

Misfortunes caused by lightning, winds, and drought are explained as failures in social relations among people of the community or between the members of the community and the spirits. Restraint in their own conduct, fulfillment of their ceremonial obligations, and show of respect to the spirits are the only safeguards against such casualties.

Caring for the Lord Spirits of the Church

The relationships established with the spirits of the church contrast to those with the spirits of the heaven in the following ways: First, the upkeep and maintenance of the spirits of the church is delegated to appointed representatives, the mayordomos, who carry the burden for the community; "all the people of the world," on the other hand, are responsible at all times for avoiding behavior which would incur the wrath of the sun and moon. Second, the obligations to the spirits of the church are standardized, while those to the spirits of heaven are ill-defined and involve avoidance of offense rather than positive expectations. Third, duties toward the church spirits are performed in repetitive events following the calendrical cycle of fiestas, while obligations to the spirits of the heaven are fulfilled sporadically, as during an eclipse of the moon or a drought.

The major strategy in dealing with the spirits of the church is to give them a fiesta. Big fiestas are associated with the big four saints. These fiestas have been the responsibility of the top mayordomos, called kobraria, and until 1966, of the alfereces. Big fiestas also occur on the Day of the Dead, the Day of Santiago, the Day of San Pedro and San Pablo, the Day of the Kings, and during Easter Week. The pattern of fiestas will be described first, followed by a detailed description of the inauguration of the alfereces, witnessed in 1965 before the institution was abolished the following year, and the fiestas of Santiago and Easter Week.

Religious fiestas occur in an annual cycle of ceremonies based on the Catholic calendar. In Tzo'ontahal the Maya calendar no longer exists, even in the twenty-day cycle that constituted a month found in the neighboring towns of Oxchuk, Larraínzar, and Chenalhó.

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tions betray the intent. As he is hauled up by ropes and hung from the bell tower "to show the world that he killed Christ," the mayordomos on the ground who are assisting those up in the bell tower jab him with long poles. In this horseplay they symbolically castrate him: I heard one mayordomo say, *"Me?ĕunun,"* (transvestite) as one well-directed blow struck Judas. On Saturday, he is let down and given a ride on horseback around town. Formerly riding a horse was the prerogative only of Ladinos in the department of San Cristóbal Las Casas (Colby and Van den Berghe 1961). Placing Judas on a horse possibly has a symbolic value in identifying him as one of the hated dominant group who asserted this privilege. As he rides around town, the mayordomos solicit gifts from the people. Everyone gives fruits except the curers, who donate money. This transaction may indicate an obligation they feel toward Judas as one source of their power over witchcraft-derived illnesses. The money is used to buy liquor, called the "washing of the arms and legs of our Lord Eskipulas." The drinking is mandatory for all the mayordomos who have participated in the hanging of Judas.

The Judas figure, which was the church's symbol of the hated Semite, is made to appear as the enemy of the Indians, the Ladino. He symbolizes the sexual license of Ladinos with Indian women, the oppression of Indians by Ladinos, and the killer of Christ. In retaliation, the Indian symbolically castrate and hang him, and finally burn his body, thus dramatically vanquishing the alien in their midst. So far as I know, the priest is unaware of the identification Indians make between the Jew and the Ladino. He prevented the ride from taking place the year I witnessed the Easter Week ceremonial on grounds that it was a pagan ritual; when he left town on Sunday, the mayordomos took Judas on his customary rounds.

The attitude toward Jesus, as the hero of the morality play, is ambivalent. Martyrdom is not the way to win in Indian society. The feeling is that power goes to the one who makes the sacrifice, and since Jesus was a Ladino sacrifice, they have more power than the Indians. During the Caste War in Chiapas in 1868, the Indians crucified an Indian youth in the hope that they would find a savior as powerful as Jesus. To this day, Indians of To?ontahal seem not to identify Jesus as one of themselves,

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and they show little personal concern with his fate in the reenactment of the Passion.

The ceremonies by which the Indians care for the spirits are Spanish introductions, but within these forms they have found a means of containing the powers of the spirits and making them work for the benefit of Indians. In the reenactment of the Passion they caricature and symbolically kill their own enemy, the Ladino, without his being aware of it. Through reformulation of introduced ideas and practices, the Indians have preserved a sense of the past in an idiom meaningful to themselves.

The belief in power derived from animal spirits was probably influenced by the Toltec belief in nahualism, or transformation of people after death into animals (Calnek 1962:22). The Toltec belief originated in the period of Mexican influence but had many local indigenous manifestations (Foster 1944). The integration of the two systems of power was brought about by calendar priests controlling the distribution of animal spirits (Calnek 1962:19). The degree of retention of calendrical knowledge and of belief in witchcraft gives us one of the best indices of acculturation in the area.[2] In Tzo?ontahal there is no remnant of calendar divination for ceremonial or predictive use. However, witchcraft based on belief in animal spirits continues to be an important factor in the contest for power. The technique of secrecy, of presenting a united front in the face of attempts by the outside Ladinos to tamper with the local social control system, persists to this day in the town.

An endemic problem in communities dominated by belief in witchcraft is control over the evil power of witches. The traditional control system in Tzo?ontahal operated through the guardianship of three sets of power-holders who checked up on each other: the ancestors, the curers, and the judges. The guardianship of the ancestors consisted in preventing any child possessed of a swayohel from the devil from growing up to abuse his power and in keeping any evil spirits from entering the town. The curers,

the Indians, whether out of cowardice or deceit, withdraw their accusation or claims, so that it is impossible to convict the evildoers for punishment; and for lack of sufficient proof they cannot be punished, or if there is enough basis to put them in prison, they sometimes disappear and flee to another jurisdiction and hide, denying their place of origin or changing their name.

2. In Oxchuk, calendar experts with the ability to divine the future still set the days for carrying out Catholic fiestas according to the twenty-day Maya ceremonial cycle. Each of the spirits symbolizing the twenty days wielded the power of good or evil. This provided the basis for predicting. When Villa Rojas studied the town in the 1940s, elders of patrilineal lineages controlled the behavior of members by causing sickness brought by their *lab*, or animal spirit (Villa Rojas 1947). In San Pedro Chenalhó, the principales exercise power through their *wayhel*, or animal spirit (Guiteras Holmes 1961). Nahuales of leaders of the patrilineages and principales are feared and respected in Larraínzar, although there is a growing discontent with their oppressive control (Holland 1963). Men believed to have thirteen nahuales figure as guardians and avengers for individuals in Pinola society, although the Indians of this community no longer have a hierarchy of civil offices through which their prestige can be publicly validated (Hermitte 1964).

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to cook their meal in the yard of the church. They threatened to beat the priest with the wood, and he retreated into the church. He later announced that he would not give mass, or weddings, or baptism. We did not mind that he did not give the mass or would not give weddings, but the people were frightened if he would not give baptism. The mayordomos had a meeting, and they agreed to give up drinking in the church if the priest would continue to give baptism, but they would no longer care for the pigs or bring wood for him without payment. We pay him fifteen pesos for an ordinary mass and forty pesos for a singing mass, so he should pay us for help. The priest was in agreement with the mayordomos.

As a result of this edict, the drinking has stopped and the mayordomos no longer eat the common meal in the church yard. Drinking was an act linked to eating, since the round of liquor served before the meal was "to prepare the stomach," and the drink after the meal was "to wash down the food." The shift to the house of the cofrade was a ready alternative in this community where the household is a recognized ritual domain.

The priest's control over the church has extended to control over the donation boxes and the saints' images. He now receives the money donated to the saints and does not permit a public accounting of the funds. Because of this, the civil officials accuse him of stealing some of the money. A recent incident recounted below by one of the prayer-reciters led to even more severe censure:

The bishop visited our church, and when he looked under the silk robes of the Virgin Santa Lucia he found a wooden dress covered with gold paint. He told the priest to have the cloth dress removed. The people were very upset by this since they are very proud of the dresses bought for the Virgin. One of the prayer-reciters dreamed that the Virgin appeared before her in tears, saying she did not want to appear nude in public. We [the group of prayer-reciters] went to see the bishop to demand that the Virgin should wear her dress in church and that the priest be sent out of the town. The bishop refused. He said the Virgin did not feel cold because she was just a statue. Ha! How could she not feel cold?

sion: "I pay respect to my elders. I greet my brothers and my children [extension of kinship terms]. To all I give respect. Thus I fare well. I have not been killed, nor have I been sick."

A good man is a generous host, expressed in the phrase, "he gives many tortillas." He serves his community in public office but avoids the appearance of seeking power or self-aggrandizement. When he gives orders, it is in a soft, low tone, supplicating rather than ordering with the phrase, "If you would please lend a hand." He gives thanks readily for any service rendered both to God and to his fellow man. He avoids any show of anger, and is always careful to show consideration of others. Those who are of "another heart" or "two-hearted" are the opposite, seeking disputes, "thinking small," "being miserly," and of a "very black soul."

The heightened awareness of the state of the heart of others comes from the ever-present fear of witchcraft. Since the people feel their survival depends upon perception of evil heart before it strikes, they develop an acute sense of the behavioral clues that indicate its presence.

Conformity and deviance. Conventional or preferred behavior is characterized as "reasonable." The phrase "?ič' rason," to take reason or understanding, is applied to a child who is expected to have reason at the age of twelve years or so, as well as to the arrival at agreement of competing parties, as in the case of betrothal.

Reasonable behavior is any behavior conforming to socially accepted understandings of what the world is. These include what a person of non-Indian culture might characterize as beliefs based on faith. They "know" that there are hill spirits, wood spirits who cut off people's heads, and men who transform themselves into animals. Occasionally they subject given understandings to empirical tests: one woman tested the belief that a woman could rid the milpa of insect pests only by walking through a planted field wearing a new skirt; she walked through the field wearing a worn skirt and her belief was confirmed when she found that the insect pests were not killed but just fled and returned later. Empiricism is not lacking; the difference between the content of their category of what is rational or reasonable and ours is based on the premises, not the process of reasoning.

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as lawyers. The defendant is sometimes accompanied by supporters who feel that he has a case. The failure of parents to accompany a defendant, regardless of his age, is attributed to their shame over their child's misbehavior and their own failure to train him properly. The judge does not limit himself to passing judgment but also counsels the defendant as to how he should behave.

The town hall is usually shut and locked at noon unless some business requires more time. In the evening about six, the officials return to take their same posts. They sit with their arms drawn inside their woolen jackets for warmth. After a half an hour they drift home. People rely on the presence of officials rather than particular actions to maintain social control, and it is their appearance at regular hours that assures the villagers that the town is being well run.

Local autonomy depends primarily on retaining social control functions. Civil officials try to settle disputes locally and avoid the entry of Ladino officials from the departmental capital, although the judges and president will threaten the defendant with taking the case to the department if they cannot get compliance. The number of cases referred to the capital has been increasing since 1950 as Table 32 shows. In 1951 the federal government began to fine local officials who failed to report homicide cases and accidental death. The local officials complied, but departmental courts were unable to bring action in over half the cases. No action was taken in 72 cases, or 54 percent, in comparison with 62 cases, or 46 percent, in which action was taken. Domestic cases, except for one of adultery, are adequately handled in local courts and do not appear in the departmental records. The trend shows an increasing number of cases of crimes against persons in comparison to crimes against property, an index to the breakdown in social control processes.

The Church

The church has been built and on two occasions rebuilt—when the tower was struck by lightning—with funds collected locally from household heads. Damage to the church was attributed to the patron saint of the neighboring town of Oxchuk who, the people say, was fighting with their patroness, Santa Lucía. The townspeople feel that they own the

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The townspeople feel that they own the church, and many resent the intrusion of the priest who resides sometimes two or three days a week in the adjoining rectory. In the past five years, however, the priest has succeeded in asserting more control over the church: he has forbidden drinking in the church or in the courtyard, a prohibition that resulted in an open confrontation with the leading cofrade (Chapter 9); and he now controls the keys to the church and to the money boxes, formerly the responsibility of the fiscal. The two lay sisters who are in residence during the week hold the keys and are in charge of the upkeep of the church.

People always show respect for the church by removing their hats as they pass the entrance, even when they are at a distance. As they enter the church, they always kneel and cross themselves. They may spit on the floor of the church, for this is not a sign of disrespect.

The complementarity of church and cabildo is still formally recognized in ceremonial events: participants bow to the church and then to the cabildo during processions. The transfer of sacred symbols from one locale to the other at the time of the inauguration of civil and religious officials ceremonially signifies the integration of civil and religious authority, despite the growing separation in day-to-day functions in each of the domains.

The church serves as a staging platform for the images and symbolic offerings to them in the annual cycle of ceremonies. During the nine days of ceremony accorded to the major saints, their images are moved to the center of the altar or to the center of the nave. The staging effects are particularly notable during the fiesta of Holy Week, when the reenactment of the crucifixion is performed in the nave. The mayordomos, under the direction of the fiscal and the lay sisters, move the saints about and prepare adornments of flowers and pine needles.

The church is the locus for the weekly mass given by the priest. The men stand on the left side of the church (facing the altar), while the women kneel or sit on the floor to the right. A few benches near the altar are occupied by the Ladinos of the area who attend the mass. The lay sisters indicate to the congregation when they should kneel and rise in response to the cues of the sermon or mass.

In addition to these scheduled events, the church serves as a locus where

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782 individuals can visit the saints on their own personal missions. Appendix 3A records the visits of groups and individuals on an ordinary Sunday. Their actions in the church are part of the standardized behavior incumbent upon all those who enter the building.

Communication with the saints is ensured either by touching and kissing their images or, if the images are enclosed in glass cases, by tapping the gl... with offerings of money. It is believed that one gains an audience [562] by pay...g for it. When groups larger than individual clusters of visitors enter the church, sexual segregation is observed (for example, when a male child enters with his mother on the occasion of a mass, he remains with her until more people arrive, then leaves her to stand on the male [788] side of the nave). Ritualized wailing is done by women only. After such a [52] demonstration the women show normal composure, since wailing is a standardized mode of communication, not an outburst of uncontrolled emotion. It is private and concerns the individual wailer and the saint to which she appeals; none of the other visitors in the church indicates any sign of response to these displays. Unless there is a focused activity going [794] on, such as a mass or series of baptisms, each visiting group is an autonomous unit, carrying out its own mission.

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562 People visit the church most commonly in pairs of two. They congregate for mass in a pattern in which women and children enter first, and men, who linger in the plaza until the church is partially filled, enter in clusters and take their places on the male side of the nave. The religious and civil officials enter last, and the mayordomos, whose attendance is one of the obligations of their post, move toward the altar at the front. Men attend church less frequently than do women.

The School

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[177] Unlike the church, the school is regarded as an alien structure. Assist-
[178] ance in reconstruction and maintenance is given under pressure rather than voluntarily. Until fairly recently, schoolteachers too remained unintegrated in the community. In the early years of the school's existence, there was a rapid turnover of teachers. The employment of a schoolmaster with a wife and daughters stabilized the position after 1953. The school has be-

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The behavior described for each institution in earlier chapters will be summarized as a mode of adjustment or adaptation in relation to the beliefs that give it meaning and purpose.

Economic Activities

Learning agricultural tasks and pottery-making in the household is part of adjusting to membership in the community. Parents are responsible for teaching the value of industriousness and are held accountable throughout the life of the child. Agricultural tasks are scheduled in a yearly cycle that provides sufficient flexibility for a man to carry out community and familial ceremonial responsibilities. In milpa agriculture, there is no specialization of tasks. Small-plot agricultural production with a simple technology has been reinforced by the land reform program. Since the lands incorporated under the Ejido Commission in the 1930s were attached to the community, agriculturalists were not forced to adjust to new ecological conditions. Politicalization was minimal since the local commission operated within the old civil hierarchy. In the recent expansion of ejido colonies in hot country, Indians from the community have developed alliances with non-Indians in asserting claims to the land. Without any preexisting civil hierarchy, these ejidatarios have not had to adjust their activities to a given structure of authority, but have developed independent political organizations as an adaptation to their new environment.

Women's work in pottery is less subject to changes in techniques and organization than is men's. The schema of production in simple tasks in a fixed sequence makes it easier to teach girls each process and reinforces a given pottery tradition. My guess would be that if wheel production were introduced, it would liberate the creativity of each potter by freeing her of established routines.

Pottery production is not surrounded, as is agricultural production, by ceremonials. There is no god to whom one lights candles or gives offerings to ensure success, although there are hazards in production, particularly at the time of firing. Agricultural productivity, on the other hand, is thought to depend on the proper relation between the spirits of the heaven and of the church with the spirits of crops.

In the new economic activities, the Indians have shown both adjustive

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Religious Behavior

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776 Socialization of the child includes teaching him how to adjust to spirits of the house and of the surrounding hills and springs as well as to people in his social environment. He learns the obligations he owes to these spirits in the rituals of house inauguration and curing. Place spirits are given an ethnic identity. The ancestor figures who live in the cave are Indians from whom all the people originate. The Ladino spirits residing in the houses and springs are a mythological projection of a conquered people who have learned to coexist with their conquerors by paying tribute of candles, food, liquor, and entertainment. If the spirits are not won over, they will admit the evil spirits who bring sickness and death. Their presence is known only by the trouble they permit rather than by good occurences; the miracles they perform are an undoing of the harm they have permitted.

776 The belief in the potentially dangerous nature of these spirits when their
782 envy or appetite is aroused is linked to an understanding that men and
789 gods alike are jealous and vindictive. It generates behavior that is in conformity with that of the ancestors. A sense of security is reinforced by the protective symbols of incense, the cross of palm hung on the entrance posts of the yard and house, candles which "blind the eye of the devil," and garlic mixed with hot herbs which exude an odor that evil spirits dislike. When the uneasy contract between spiritual and human coresidents [755] is upset, a curing ritual is performed to make everyone "of one heart." Be- [571] havior with respect to both spirits and people stems from a policy of ap- [273] peasement through entertainment and liquor provided in household ceremonials.

776 Behavior differs in regard to the category of saints called "spirits in the
777 heaven" and those called "spirits in the church." Spirits of the heavens
778 have incorporated pre-Conquest deities with those introduced by the missions. They are a more powerful force influencing human moral behavior. [834] Illicit sexual relations carried out in the milpa by day are believed to [784] arouse the envy of "Our Father the Sun" who will cause the milpa to burn by refusing to give way to rain. Similarly "Our Grandmother the

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Moon" will not give way to the sun if her envy is aroused by seeing such things. These spirits of the heavens have greater control over natural forces than the spirits of the church, or saints. The saints have only limited influence over the souls of particular crops and chickens; people say "they are just of the pueblo."

The distinction between the "big saints of the church" and the lesser saints is recognized in the rituals accorded each group. Four of the saints are given big fiestas which are longer, require more expenditures, and involve more people than the fiestas for the lesser saints. Few distinctions are made between the personalities of the big saints and those of the lesser saints. They are big because their fiestas are big. The fact that the townspeople have selected four from the rostrum of saints given them suggests a link with the four guardian gods of the pre-Conquest pantheon, but except for San Pedro the Martyr's identification with Chac, or Cha'uk in Tzeltal, I could not make any other associations.

To say that there is a system of beliefs does not rule out inconsistencies. Some contradictions can coexist without giving rise to tension. Awareness of incongruence either between beliefs, or between beliefs and behavior associated with them, arises in specific events in which the conflict becomes apparent—that is, when the participants must make choices between alternatives that affect their interests.

The people do not recognize any division between pre- and post-Conquest spiritual entities. Sometimes two personalities from Catholic sources may be equated with one of pre-Conquest origin in order to fit a story format, as in the case of Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, with K'oš (Chapter 8). The priests, who had a special dispensation to make whatever cultural translations were necessary in teaching the doctrines of the church (Doctrina Cristiana Lima 1584 III, 3, Recopilación de Leyes, Ley 22 lib. cited in Lamb 1956:531), are responsible for some of the reworking of the two traditions. But local elaborations reveal indigenous cognitive patterning.

Contradictions in myths concerning the origin of crops show some gaps in the union of pre-and post-Conquest legends. The gift of corn is attributed in one myth to the patroness, Santa Lucía, who received it from the patron saint of the neighboring town of Oxchuk. Another myth gives

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credit to insects who carried it from the hills. Still another myth synthesizes both pre-Conquest and Catholic agents: San Antonio, seeing an insect bearing a kernel of corn, persuaded a woodpecker to break open the rock which blocked the entrance to the hill where the corn was stored and then organized the insects to bring forth the corn. The contradictions in these myths do not motivate the people to bring the several versions into line with one another because the rituals associated with beliefs concerning crops provide an overall insurance rather than a specific contract. The Indians do not trust their security to any one saint or even group of deities. The two candles lit in the milpa following the harvest are an offering to the "owner of the earth"; along with this, offerings of corncobs are made to the saints in the church and to the house saint. Even the birds are left an offering of corn kernels in the fields after the harvest so that they will not be jealous of the farmer.

These myths fail to provide specific charters for action. What they do provide is a set of dispositions to behave in certain ways. The underlying disposition is that of self-imposed guilt and recrimination. The ancestors left their cave because the people failed to give them a fiesta; the spirit of money left the town because the religious officials in the past failed to adorn the church and improvidently strewed the floor with green peso notes in place of pine needles. Sickness and poverty are attributed to their own failures.

Another disposition is that of appeasement through ceremonial entertainment. This is carried out in the fiestas for the spirits of the church and the spirits of the heaven just as for the spirits of the house, caves, springs, and hills surrounding the town. Community-wide disaster is interpreted as a direct result of failure to perform rituals establishing reciprocity with the spirits. When individuals face crop loss, they review their own ritual obligations to see what went wrong. The curing ceremony is another effort to appease the devil whom the witch has persuaded to give illness to his victim.

A third such disposition is to project human conflict into the supernatural sphere. The conflict between Santa Lucía and the patron saint of Oxchuk, Santo Tomás was taken to be the reason for the church tower being

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struck by lightning on two occasions. The solution was to rebuild the tower of metal so that Santo Tomás could not demolish it if he struck again, a defensive reaction which is typical of the Indians in their extra-community relations. When an eclipse of "Our Grandmother the Moon" occurred during my stay in town, everyone went to her assistance, banging metal tools and pots, in what was believed to be a fight with the sun.

The emphasis on self-recrimination and guilt in explaining failure minimizes the build-up of protest. Economic hardship attributed to a man's own improvidence in relation to his fellow man and God are accepted as his lot in life. The drama of the curing ritual projects the Indians' sense of their own guilt for the suffering and poverty they endure.

Political Behavior

The structure of the civil hierarchy has been maintained but organizational changes have occurred which have weakened the basis for it. The alternation of offices between church and civil positions survives in the lower levels, but the new leaders in civil affairs now begin in the Ejido Commission, and few of those who pass as president take on posts in the religious hierarchy. The appearance of continuity has been maintained in communal rituals in which the principales provide the link with the past and the alfereces, until 1966, were the link between civil and religious wings; but in the day-to-day running of the town, the officials do not act on these premises. The balance between officials from each side of the dual division has been upset by the population increase on one side. The abolition of the institution of alfereces gives public recognition to the growing awareness of imbalance. Moreover, the factions based on the new trucking cooperatives that cut across the dual division reduce the effectiveness of the dual division in channeling conflict.

Behavioral deviation from the norms is present in all societies and is not in itself an index to structural change. This comes about when new interpretations are given to events that undermine confidence in existing institutions and leaders. Political conflicts in the past were interpreted as a contest between members of the sides of the dual division and hostility

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628 438 establish with them the relations of posada and compadrazgo, men-
571 tioned above, as well as (in the infrequent cases of inter-com-
608 582 munity marriage), some affinal kinship ties. In the few recorded
628 166 cases of emigration from the village, some members of the com-
602 munity keep communication with a few consanguineal relatives living
in other Indian villages, although social exchanges and the memory
of such relatives tend to die out after a generation or two.

105 With the other Indian communities in the area, Amatenango
and Aguacatenango share a common material culture and belief
system, derived from a Highland Maya cultural tradition, the same
linguistic background, and a subsistence pattern based on agri-
culture. They are peasant, in the sense that they are rural vil-
lages which depend, for survival, not only on agricultural work,
but on economic exchange with other semi-urban and urban centers
(Redfield, 1956:25-28).

438 Aguacatenango buys pottery and chayotes from Amatenango,
[273] whose women come periodically to sell them, and trago (drinking
alcohol) which some Amatenangueros produce illegally. Amatenango
buys from Aguacatenango surplus corn.

628 The two towns have amicable relations, thinking of each
[311] other as neighbors, and sharing the same pasture lands, and
312 source of water for irrigation. The two communities share the
628 776 same cultural hero, called Juan Lopez in Aguacatenango and Lopez
Shuntón in Amatenango, connected with the corn and with the
"lightening who lives in a cave." For Aguacatenangueros this
personage is the builder of the roads, responsible for the erad-
ication of "cannibalism," the conversion of man-hunting animals

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628 into mild forest beasts, the peace made with the "kings of Guate-
776 mala" and the opening of trade with Comitán. He is also in both communities a powerful nahual (supernatural being controlled by the witches or a witch himself), and in Amatenango everyone prays to him on the day of the Santa Cruz (May 3). Both communities agree that he was "an Amatenanguero, born somewhere in the direction of Chiapa de Corzo." There are no compadre relations established between the two villages, but two cases of intermarriage [608] [582] and two of posada relations have been reported (Verbitsky, 1959a).

Both towns criticize the other for its "costumbres," criticisms which are related directly, as will be shown later, to some differences in social structure which will be discussed in this work. Amatenango women criticize Aguacatenango women as being lazy but mistreated by their husbands who make them gather their own firewood, and because they run away from their husbands seeking work in San Cristobal. Aguacatenango men criticize Amatenangueros for being lazy and not seeking work in the fincas, preferring to hunt rats in the cornfields, and their women for being dirty and authoritarian.

361 The central plaza contains the Church, the local government offices, [366] the school and the National Indian Institute (INI) cooperative [368] store (see below), in Amatenango this list being increased by the INI clinic. Around these plazas (open squares) the houses are relatively concentrated, the population density is high and the size of the sitio (a household plot) small. (There are about seven or eight sitios in a block one hectare in size.) Toward the margins of the town the houses thin out, being surrounded by milpas. Well established family groups live toward the center, while newcomers, poorer families and deviants live toward the [996] periphery. Sitios within the center are highly valued in both communities, the outskirts of the town being closer to the unknown dangers of the monte (hill and forest) with its malevolent spirits (animal souls of witches in the search of victims, owners of the caves, etc.).

361 Surrounding the villages one finds the communal grass
311 lands for pasture and the irrigated milpas. The grass lands and
312 the water source for the milpas de regadío (irrigated corn fields)
423 are shared by both villages, although Amatenango makes use of the water first, since the stream flows through Amatenango before it reaches the Aguacatenango lands.

311 Towards the hill slopes the milpas de temporal (corn fields depending on seasonal rain) are planted in scattered small groups, fenced together against the invasion of cattle;[1] and alternating with forested patches.

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[1] See footnote 1, p. 17.

621
627 Many cases of adultery never go outside the fences of the sitio, and many witchcraft cases come to the Ayuntamiento only after a murder has been committed in "revenge," in which case the Ayuntamiento is only called in to re-establish order and calm down the relatives of the deceased, trying to avoid further revenge and bloodshed.

794
776 The Mayordomos, on the other hand, have no control over the household Saints which are "owned" by each family and kept in the house in a special altar, nor do they relate directly, within the Church organization, to the many supernatural beings which populate the belief system of the villagers. The "owners of the hills," spirits which inhabit the caves, rivers and wells, the mythological creatures such as the Sombrerón (frightening ghost which appears to tempt people in isolated spots) or Juan Lopez (the local culture hero), and the evil and powerful souls of witches
794 are in a separate domain. These can be controlled only by the
624 curanderos, who have powerful souls, or by the principales. This
774 last group (principales) is also "in charge" of taking care of
776 the health of the village, and do so by having their own souls patrol the boundaries of the community at night and by forbidding entrance to sickness and plagues. The men capable of such supernatural performances "own" animal spirits (nahuales) which help them in their task. Mayordomos, on the contrary, can be men without such powers, and do not need to belong to the select group which deals with the supernatural outside the realms specified by the Catholic Church.

000 The communal offices of the Ayuntamiento and Mayordomías

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156 The picture of life in Amatenango[67] and Aguacatenango is,
62 not, however, from the ideological point of view of the community
754 members, spread only into sanctions of negative dimensions. There
777 are some justifications for wealth or success which are as intimate a part of the world view of the villagers as witchcraft is, because witchcraft has a positive counterpart: suerte (luck).

777 Suerte, as witchcraft power, is also a supernatural power given to the particular individual without the person's will having control over its possession. Some people are born with good suerte, some people with bad suerte. Some people can be "given" a particular suerte by a supernatural being[1] at some time in their life to keep until his death or for some period of time. Of course, a man cannot give his suerte away or transmit it to his children. The suerte is not a general power, but has specific dimensions. For example, a man has suerte to raise cattle, which would, then, grow and reproduce tremendously in his lifetime. But, he may very well have bad bean crops. His children, at his death,

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[1] The suerte can be given by many different supernatural beings. Some informants say it is Dios (God), or the Virgin Mary, some say it is the Sombrerón, or owner of the deer and caves, to whom one has to promise to give one's soul at death, some others indicate that it is written in one's destiny at birth to have a particular type of suerte. The variations in the belief are many, and in a system of ideology without a Church body to create, and control the diffusion of dogma, this is to be expected.

[776] [779] [538] [787] [771] The only organized dogma available to the villager is the local Catholic Church, but this dogma leaves out a series of beliefs such as suerte and brujeria as unacceptable. Therefore, these beliefs are only transmitted informally, together with folk-tales, myths and the like. Because dreams are of great importance in relation to these beliefs, each individual can contribute, through his personal dream experiences, to the general pool of ideology of the community. Therefore, tales and myth, dream experiences, the "true" stories that people are told in the evening by particular relatives or friends, all tend to produce a mushrooming of alternative versions of the same or similar sets of beliefs.

159 422 593 578 During the branding of animals in the village, Francisco received a letter from Candelario asking him to brand the cow and calf for him. Francisco and his son, Epifanio, did so.

This started the conflict. Jose Mendez, Juana's brother, felt that the cow and calf did not rightfully belong to Candelario, nor to Francisco or Epifanio, but to him. Epifanio had a fight with Jose, and the latter, insisting on his rights, which were not very clear, stated that Candelario had sold him the cow (which was not true), when they were working in the lowlands together. Casimira, Juana and Jose's mother, supported Jose's claims over the animals, because it was the money obtained from Juana's bull that had paid for the cow that had the calf. The relatives of her daughter's husband had less right over the animal than Juana's brother.

It is possible that Jose felt that the cow and calf had been purchased with the money obtained from selling a bull which was originally his father's, not his sister's. Even if it was his sister's, he felt he had more right to use it than the sister's husband's brother and father. If owner of the bull or the cow had been a brother rather than a sister, the conflict would not have arisen. (For genealogy see Fig. 17.)

177 178 754 796 613 Third, with the introduction of Catholicism, although the native belief system has preserved many of its early features, it is now, without doubt, a new syncretic elaboration. The pervasive witchcraft powers are, for example, attributed now to Catholic saints, but the concept that the lineage heads of principales have witchcraft power to punish deviants within their

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195]

177
178 lineage (which exists today in many other communities such as
754 Oxchuc), has disappeared. Without the basic belief in the super-
776 natural controlling powers of the lineage heads, the ritual ac-
613 tivities performed by the lineage as a corporation became mean-
ingless, and fell out of use.

592 Finally, from an economic point of view, the large patriline
613 household-compound, as a productive unit, is unfunctional, and the
434 characteristic form of the domestic group is now the nuclear house-
421 hold, which also contributes to the weakening of patriline strength.
578 Within the nuclear household, it is difficult for its members to discriminate between the part of the household income that is derived from the household head in his capacity as a worker and that which is from his unmarried sons; between those profits which are derived from the household head as a capitalist who has provided tools and implements, and finally those which come from his capacity as "owner" of land. In a larger household, differences in labor in-put, rivalry between the women about the food controlled by themselves and belonging to their husbands, or between the men about the property rights of the produce derived from their common effort, tend to create conflict and disunity. In the
592 nuclear household, the division of labor is explicit, the role ex-
594 actly and minimally distributed, and conflict, in the case of its
578 occurrence, is likely to be more quickly solved because the fission of the nuclear domestic group is equivalent to the disappearance of the household itself.

178 The functions before performed by the lineage are now
613 performed by the household, the community, or by the neighborhood
592
621
591
184

In addition to this regular ladder of officials representing the center and its close-lying barrios are judges representing the *colonias*, or rural settlements, of San Vicente, San Caralampio, and Crus Quemada. They do not regularly attend the townhall sessions, but always appear at major ceremonies and at the inauguration of new officials. Only after I had elicited officials from two informants was I able to get from the third the three judges of the colonias with the question, "Are there any other officials in the cabildo?"

These civil officials constitute the traditional ladder of the hierarchy. The positions of president and *sintiku* (in Spanish *síndico*), not included in the offices of the townhall as a category by informants, were elicited in response to the question stated above. These posts are occupied by younger men who are able to read, write, and speak fluently in Spanish. Literacy, until the present generation, was limited to those in the 30-year age bracket. Those with such skills passed immediately into the *comisario ejidal*, commission for land grants, where they assisted in the control and redistribution of land granted under the ejido program, or went directly into the post of *síndico*. Thus they were able to avoid the onerous and time-consuming functions of the traditional posts and enter into the remunerative post of president, where their authority was recognized at an early age. With improved literacy, the competition for such posts is increasing. Although informants say that the post of president alternates for the two sides of the dual division, case materials do not bear this out.

The only Ladino in the hierarchy is the secretary. For the first time this year (1964) the post of secretary has been taken by an Indian of the town. This is part of the power play described below.

Naming of civil officials is done in November, first in a closed session in the townhall at which each official names his successor, followed by a mass meeting *(Komun K'op)* at which the names are read to the assembled household heads in the plaza. To the question, "What are all the kinds of offices in the church?" the response was given: *martomaetik*, mayordomos or caretakers, and *alperesetik*, alfereces (or captains, the Spanish term *alferezes* comes from the Arabic). There are 16 mayordomos. Role terms for the mayordomos indicated that each saint was repre-

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sented by an elder *tatil martoma* and a junior *nič'anil martoma*, and that the 15 mayordomos were further ranked in terms of the four major saints, the *mas mamalil* or more senior, whose mayordomos are referred to as *kobraria*, cofradías or brotherhoods, and the remaining as mayordomos. The four *kobrarias* were ranked in terms of the importance and expense of the saint whom they support. The order for Tzo?ontahal is Sacramento *(Sakramentu)*, Virgin Santa

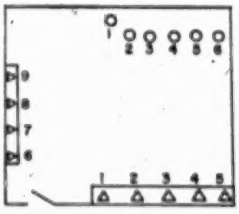

CHART 2 — EVENING, DECEMBER 31, HOUSE OF NEW JUDGE (ELICITED)

WOMEN (circles):
1 Woman speaker *(Me?il K'op)*
2 Wife of president *(Yinam Presirente)*
3-6 Wives of juniors *(Yinam Nič'anil)*[a]

MEN (triangles):
1 Leading house official *(Statal Nakawane)*
2 New judge *(Al' Alkal)*
3-5 Assistants, sons of judge *(Balnialetik)*
6-9 Woodgatherers *(Akni?etik)*

Lucia *(Halal Me?tik Santalusia)*, San Pedro Martyr *(Tatik Martil)*, and San Francisco *(Tatik Sanpransisku)*. There was complete agreement among the three informants questioned regarding this rank order, but for rank order of the 12 remaining mayordomos in charge of the 19 lesser saints there was no agreement between informants, and even the same informant was inconsistent in different eliciting sessions.

Outside the traditional hierarchy is the *pišal* (in Spanish *fiscal*), who is the direct assistant of the priest and serves in an advisory capacity in charge of the church activities of the brotherhoods and mayordomos in the absence of the priest. This role was not elicited, but in my questioning about fiestas he was mentioned as performing a certain role. The incumbent in the past three years was serving as president for the third time, showing the scarcity of men with the needed literary skills. The fiscal is usually relieved of other posts while serving in office. Another set of roles external to the hierarchy are the *me?eletik* (or *resadoras*, the Spanish term for female prayermakers). These are usually widowed or single wo-

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men whom the lay sisters assisting the priest have organized to help carry out the Mass and other church rituals.

Another pair of officials, the *krinsipaletik* or principales, were not mentioned in the category "officials in the townhall" or in that of "officials in the church," until I questioned, "Who names the officials?" The response was, "Principales with the president." In order to arrive at the higher honorific posts of principal, one must serve five times in the civil and six times in the religious posts in the traditional hierarchy. The principales provide continuity in the transfer of authority, remaining in the townhall when the old officials depart to their homes, and passing over the staffs to the new officials (App. 1, Q. 28, 31). It is a position without power in the day-to-day administration of affairs. Although the incumbents occupy prestigeful positions and carry out ceremonial acts, many men avoid the office because of the loss of status in carrying out one of their most important acts, the collection of contributions for the major fiestas. The two principales must hold the plate into which the money is turned over by the police, and this causes "embarrassment." Formerly they were also bankers, holding the money until it was spent. This responsibility gave prestige to the act of receiving the money, now redefined as a sort of begging operation.

A ceremonial link between the civil and religious wings is the group of officers known as the *alperesetik*, alfereces. They are associated with the four major saints, who are also represented by the *kobrarias* of Sacramento, Santa Lucia, San Pedro Martyr, and San Francisco. Their rank order is determined not by the importance of the saint but by the order of entry into office. These are named: *tat pasaro*, the past "father"; *šil pasaro*, remains past; *sčebal pasaro*, second past; and *?aš' alperes*, new alferez. They sit, move, and are served in this order wherever they appear. Although tied to a *č'ultat*, spirit father or saint, they function in the townhall in bearing the banners there from the church for civil affairs (App. 1, Q. 27), and they provide the post which is crucial for learning the set speeches useful in all formal occasions, called the *pat?ot'an*, 'behind the heart.' Because of the crucial nature of this speechmaking, no man can progress into the post of first or second regidor without having passed through that of alferez. This post is the most difficult to fill because of the high outlay (3000 pesos in one year of average expenditures, about half the

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these apparently irrelevant comments reveal the power play going on behind the scene of the ritual.

The observed schedule for the civil inauguration (App. 1, column 4) differed from the elicited in four details. The first of these was an item omitted by both informants: after liquor was served in the house of the president, the entire company stood up and "turned toward the wall" (App. 1, Q. 20). When I questioned my informant, he corrected the orientation "toward the wall" and said that they were turning toward the east in deference to the leader of all the saints of the east, led by Santo Aṭio. He said that it was done in all household celebrations in order "to be sure that the devil does not enter." Belief concerning these saints is fragmentary, and perhaps because of this, behavior relating to them is not easily recalled. These behavioral sherds, when cut off from the belief system they once dramatized, survive in "perpetuating the custom of the ancestors" *(hič sluwar hič likem me?tiktatik)*.

Another detail not mentioned by informants was the presence in the house of the president of the rural colonia inhabitants (Chart 6). This omission is typical of the neglect in reporting the activity or presence of anyone other than residents of the center. When I asked what they were doing there, I was told they came "to know the president."

Finally, an important divergence from expected behavior occurred when the schoolteacher, instead of the secretary, delivered the oath of office. This change was evidence of the schoolteacher's success in a factional struggle developing around new economic enterprises in the town. The former Ladino secretary was in close alliance with the former president and had supporters in the group of 20 co-owners, Indians from the village, of the truck when he had purchased. When the incoming president with his brother bought a truck with the assistance of 30 members of a truck-owning cooperative, a new focus for factional strife appeared in the town. The new cooperative was supported by the schoolteacher in his own bid for power. When the truck owners ran into any difficulty with the highway patrol, carrying wood or passengers without permit, the driver would refer them to the schoolteacher, who would then claim it

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